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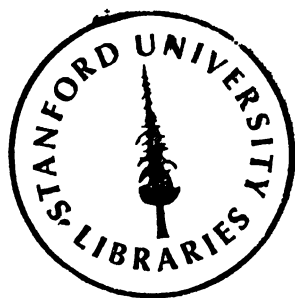
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**THE**  
**DISCARDED SON.**

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***A TALE.***

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THE  
**DISCARDED SON;**

OR,  
*HAUNT OF THE BANDITTI:*

A Tale.

---

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

---

BY  
**REGINA MARIA ROCHE,**

AUTHOR OF THE  
**CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY; MAID OF THE HAMLET;  
VICAR OF LANSDOWN; TRADITION OF THE  
CASTLE; MUNSTER COTTAGE BOY; CASTLE CHAPEL;  
TRECOTHICK BOWER, &c. &c.**

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Thou hast been  
As one in suffering all, that suffers nothing;  
A man who Fortune's buffets and rewards  
Has ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are they  
Whose blood and judgment mingled are so well  
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger,  
To sound what stop she please.

SHAKESPEARE.

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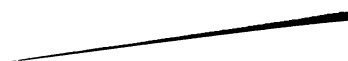
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1825.

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THE  
**DISCARDED SON.**

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CHAP. I.

"Search, and know all mankind's mysterious ways,  
But trust the secret of thy soul to none ;  
—————This is the way—  
This only, to be safe in such a world as this is."

ROWE.

THE keeper entered abruptly, and to the astonishment of Osmond, informed him he was free. Osmond demanded of him to whom he was indebted for his discharge?

"I have no time to waste in telling you particulars," replied he in a surly accent ;  
"to know you have got it, might satisfy you, I think."

Osmond asked no further questions, nor delayed returning to the hotel, accompanied by his friend, the Duke D'Angoumoise ; but by no means as happy at his unexpected restoration to liberty, as might have been expected. The idea of its being owing to the interference of Mactalla with the Duke D'Amalfi, entirely damped the pleasure it was calculated to afford him.—In this idea he was confirmed the moment he cast his eyes upon his valet, whom he found in his drawing-room.

“So, sir,” said he, “I perceive you have thought proper to disregard my orders.”

“Well, I confess I have, signor,” returned Mactalla ; “but I am sure when you give yourself time to reflect, you must acknowledge it would have been surprising if I had not—surprising, if I had let you remain in a damp dungeon, when I knew I could get you out of it ; and, moreover, that the Marchesa Morati and Count Placentia, who gave you, in a manner, as one may say, into my care, would never forgive me, if I had acted otherwise.”

“A pretty light,” cried Osmond, who, notwithstanding his vexation, was scarcely able to suppress a smile at this latter assertion, “you must have made me appear in to his excellency.”

“In as handsome a light as you could desire, signor,—I know his excellency intimately, as I believe I have already mentioned, so I went to him. I told him plump that I had come out of my own head, (which to be sure was no lie,) to borrow three hundred pounds for you; as through my forgetting your portmanteau at Venosa, in which was the principal part of your cash, you were put to very great inconvenience for that sum, your pride being too great to allow you to borrow of any one, which I knowing, I had made bold to wait upon his excellency, to ask it of him, taking it for granted he would be happy to have an opportunity of conferring a favour on a person to whom his friends and relations at Acerenza were under such great obligations; Count Placentia being certainly indebted to you for the preservation of his life and the right

use of his senses—‘Aye, aye, so he is,’ cried the good duke; ‘and there is nothing, on that account, which I would not do to serve the chevalier, your master; so take this purse to him,’ presenting me one, in the most handsome and gentlemanly manner possible, ‘and give him my compliments, and I will have the pleasure of calling on him in the course of the day.’—— ‘That I will, an please your excellency,’ said I; and away I flew to seek a lawyer, to settle the rest of the business. By the Powers, no one can be at a loss to find one here—the instant it was known I wanted one, they came flocking about me like a swarm of bees; and ‘give it to me,’ cries one of them, meaning the purse, which I kept in my hand, and ‘give it to me,’ cries another—‘Softly, softly, gentlemen,’ says I, “I’ll give my money to neither one nor other of you; but if any one of you will follow me into the prison, to settle a little business I have to transact there, I will give him—what I think proper.”

Though this statement did not, by any means, tend to reconcile Osmond to the

conduct of Mactalla, still he could not bring himself to express any further disapprobation of it, owing, as he clearly saw it was, to the sincerity of his regard for him. He determined, however, to acquit himself, without delay, of meanness and deception in the eyes of the Duke D'Amalfi, by coming to a candid and immediate explanation with his excellency on the subject.

"Well," said the French duke, "'tis unnecessary, I presume, my dear friend, to say that I most sincerely rejoice at your restoration to liberty—rejoice at your having so speedy an opportunity of chastising the person who deprived you of it—You doubtless," he added, as if he looked upon his doing so as a thing of course, "mean to demand satisfaction of Lord O'Sinister for his conduct to you?"

Osmond looked with astonishment for a few minutes at his grace without speaking.

"Certainly not the kind of satisfaction which your grace, I fancy, means," he then replied: "even though I had received from his lordship what I was con-



scious the world would consider sufficient provocation to justify my requiring such from him, still would my principles, the profession I have embraced, the disparity of our ages, and many other powerful considerations, withhold me from such a measure. As I have already said, I leave it to Lord O'Sinister's own reflections, to revenge the injurious treatment I have experienced from him."

"And is it possible," demanded his grace, bending his dark and penetrating eyes upon Osmond, "that you can think of sitting down patiently under the wrongs you have met with from him?"

Osmond bowed.

The duke shrugged his shoulders and smiled sarcastically—"Well my young friend," cried he, shaking his head, "I may envy your forbearance, but I candidly confess, I do not admire it. The coolness of philosophy is unnatural in the season of youth; but you, doubtless, are the best judge of your own actions. I shall now," he added, smiling still more superciliously, "take my leave, as you may perhaps have

some preparations to make for the illustrious visitor you are expecting."

So saying, he withdrew with a sliding bow from the room.

Never had Osmond felt himself so hurt—so irritated, as at the moment, inso-much that had his grace remained another minute, he probably would have convinced him he did not possess that kind of coolness which he had so sneeringly attributed to him. In a short time, however, he recollected himself sufficiently to rejoice that the French Duke, by his precipitate departure, had prevented any thing of an unpleasing nature occurring between them—"As, no doubt," said he to himself, "reflection will convince him of the impropriety of his language to me—convince him that, without acting contrary to the character which, from the line of life I have embraced, it behoves me to support, I could not act otherwise than I intend with regard to Lord O'Sinister."

A long and early visit from the Duke D'Amalfi gave a turn to his thoughts—

Though advanced in life, his excellency still retained a countenance full of spirit and vivacity ; his conversation, too, was highly animated ; his manners and address insinuating in the extreme : altogether he was one of those kind of characters that instantly attract attention, and almost as immediately conciliate respect and esteem.

The prepossession which Osmond had conceived in his favour, from the description he had received of him from his friends at Acerenza, was confirmed the moment he beheld him ; but had the reverse been the case, he would have been deficient indeed in sensibility, as nothing could be more gracious, more condescending than his excellency's conduct to him. He spoke of the services he had rendered the Acerenza family as if done to himself, and protested nothing could afford him greater happiness than to evince his grateful sense of these, by taking him by the hand on every occasion.

Persuaded, from some inadvertent expressions of Mactalla's that Osmond was

unpleasantly situated with regard to money matters, his excellency resolved not to delay putting into his hands the whole of the sum he had received for his use from Count Placentia, and for the express purpose of doing which was his present visit.

His lordship's injunction to silence on the subject being too strict to allow him to think of violating it, he gave Osmond to understand that the sum with which he thus surprised him, was the produce of a kind of sinecure situation, which he had had vacant for some time in his gift, but considered as his from the moment he had been recommended to his patronage by Count Placentia, and the nature of which he added, he would explain to him in the course of a few days, when he should be at leisure to see and entertain him at his palace.

Osmond was not without a strong suspicion that the case was not exactly as his excellency had represented ; but was withheld, by a fear of giving offence from divulging it ; that he entertained

such a one, however, his countenance plainly intimated to his excellency.— After he had expressed the high sense he entertained of his goodness and condescension, he entered into an explanation relative to Mactalla, which afforded no little amusement to the duke, and by being placed to the right account, rendered him still more pleased with his *protégée*. Osmond after discharging the pecuniary obligation which his attendant had been the means of laying him under to his excellency, found himself still master of nine hundred pounds, the principal part of which sum he resolved on remitting the next day to his father, that want of cash might not be any hindrance to his immediately coming over, with his family, to Italy, where Osmond now considered himself settled for life.

He was about proceeding, ~~the next~~ the next morning to a banker's for the purpose of procuring an order on England for his father when the French duke abruptly entered his apartment—"My dear friend," cried he with his usual insinuating smile,

as soon as Mactalla, who was attending on his master, had withdrawn, "I fear greatly that the business which has brought me hither will make you doubt the sincerity of my regard—nay, I am convinced it will, if you are one of those who think a man should prefer the safety to the reputation of his friend."

Osmond started.—"The reputation!" he repeated with emotion—"I really cannot comprehend your grace's meaning—be so obliging as to explain it."

The duke bowed.

"The indignation which I experience whenever I hear of a base or ungenerous deed, cried he, "the abhorrence in which I hold any thing like oppression or cruelty, made me anxious for you to call Lord O'Sinister to account for his conduct to you. Your declining to do this rendered me dissatisfied, as doubtless you perceived. That your motives for your forbearance towards him were truly praiseworthy, reflection tended to convince me; still, however, I could not be reconciled to it, not only because I felt your injuries as if they

were my own, but because I was inclined to think the world would not approve of it: but notwithstanding this dissatisfaction, I determined never again to obtrude the subject on you—a determination in which I should have persevered, but for the occurrence of last night. Chance threw me into a party of which his lordship was one. Neither the speciousness of his manners, nor the high estimation in which he appeared to be held by the rest of the company, had any influence over the unfavourable sentiments with which his behaviour to you had inspired me for him. I viewed him with a chilling aspect, and studiously avoided entering into conversation with him. In the course of the evening, the Duke D'Amalfi happened to become the subject of discourse—Like other great men, he has enemies as well as friends. Prejudiced in his favour by his conduct towards you, I ranked myself on the side of the latter, and warmly opposed some bitter sarcasms thrown out against him, advancing, as a proof of his meriting the reputation he possesses for liberality of

sentiment and generosity of feeling, his behaviour to you. Lord O'Sinister, upon this, immediately took me up. He did not deny, he said, it being a proof of his being generous; but he assuredly should its being a proof of his possessing either prudence or discernment, since, if wise, he certainly would not have bestowed a favour till assured it was merited; nor if discerning, have failed of seeing that, in the present instance, this was not the case. My retort to this observation was acrimonious in the extreme—I avowed myself your friend, and insisted on his Lordship's silence respecting you, except he spoke of you in the terms you deserved. He maliciously protested he should do so in no other; and, in order to acquit himself, he said, of the cruelty and injustice of which I accused him, proceeded to assign such reasons for his conduct to you, as certainly, to those who believed him, must have justified it. I, however, was not of the number; I spoke of the manner in which you had passed over the wrongs received at his



hands, as a proof of the nobleness of your mind. He laughed sneeringly at the assertion, and openly declared it was not principle, but——But I will not, my dear friend, shock you by repeating the degrading expression he made use of; suffice it to mention, he said that it was the want of spirit, which you manifested on every occasion, that had given him such a prejudice against you—a want of which you had given the most unequivocal demonstration, by resisting all his solicitations to you, though backed by those of your friends, to enter the army, in which he could have provided most amply for you—Nay, hear me out,” continued the duke, observing the quivering lips of Osmond open—“ He bade me tell you, that so far from thinking more highly of you, for your forbearance towards him, he despised you for it; and should ever continue to do so, by ascribing it to the most degrading motives. In short, my dear friend, except you notice in the usual way his conduct to you, it will be utterly impossible for

you to remain in Naples, as nothing else can prove the vile appellation, with which he has branded you, unfounded."

"Enough, enough," cried Osmond, in an agitation to which no language could do justice—"Were I to hesitate about doing what is necessary to remove from my honour the stigma which he has cast upon it, I should deserve to lie under it the remainder of my life. The heart cannot be read; I cannot wonder, therefore, that forbearance beyond a certain point should be misinterpreted. Lord O'Sinister, by putting it out of my power to recover my reputation in any other manner, forces me to raise my hand against him—let the issue of the affair, therefore, be what it may, I trust I shall be acquitted in the sight of Heaven and the world."

"Doubt it not," cried the duke hastily: "submission to wrongs is not required even by religion, much less by society. The man who does not feel what is due to his character, and act accordingly, must be an object of general disesteem and contempt. It stands therefore to reason, that

resentment, which can alone actuate him to do this, is an useful principle in human nature, implanted for the wisest purposes, to guard private rights, and restrain the malevolence of the violent; and that, therefore——”

“My dear duke,” interrupted Osmond, with a forced smile, “argument is unnecessary in this instance. I have decided how to act, and only want to know whether you will be my friend on this occasion?”

“Assuredly,” replied the duke—“could you suppose otherwise? I presume,” and Osmond thought he spoke with eagerness, “’tis your wish that I should wait upon Lord O’Sinister immediately!”

Osmond bowed.—“I fly then,” said his grace; and kissing his hand to Osmond, he darted from the room, leaving him a prey to the most painful and opposite feelings and reflections.

Notwithstanding the provocation he had received from Lord O’Sinister, and his possessing a naturally warm and impetuous spirit, keenly susceptible of wrong, and

proudly indignant at it, he could not forbear shuddering at the thoughts of raising his hand against him, whom he believed to have been the benefactor of his family—The die, however, was cast—to retract the determination he had avowed to the French duke, was not to be thought of; he therefore strove to think with calmness on what appeared to be inevitable.

His ambassador to Lord O'Sinister speedily returned—"Well, my friend," said he, the moment he entered the apartment, "I have settled all matters with his lordship. This evening, about seven o'clock, he will give you the meeting I demanded of him for you, in one of the fields which skirt the west end of the city, a few miles from this. Lest, however, you should be tempted to imagine me fond of sanguinary measures, I assure you I endeavoured to compromise the affair between you, by proposing to him his publicly retracting what he had said to your disadvantage, and making an apology for the same; but against such a measure he positively protested. In the first place,

he said he never would retract an assertion which he knew to be just; and in the next, declared that you had set afloat reports concerning him, which had inspired him with such a thirst for vengeance, that except you gave him an opportunity of gratifying it, by meeting him like a man of spirit, it was his fixed determination to post you throughout Naples for a poltroon."

"Say no more, I beseech you, on the subject," cried Osmond, in a hurried and agitated accent, "lest you beget in my bosom a spirit as malignant—as savage as his."

He then expressing a wish to be left for a little while to himself, the French duke took his leave till evening. As soon as he departed, Osmond repaired to a banker's where he procured an order on a house in London for seven hundred pounds, which he enclosed in a letter to his sister, to be forwarded if he fell in the approaching rencontre, and which contained a circumstantial account of all that had befallen him since his arrival in Naples. He also

wrote to Count Placentia and the Duke D'Amalfi, to thank them for the kindness he had experienced at their hands, and assure them, to his last moment, he cherished the most grateful remembrance of it.—These letters, after touching on their contents, he delivered to the French duke on his return in the evening, with an entreaty for their being forwarded, should he fall, as soon as possible after his decease. He also, in case this took place, put into his hands a hundred pounds, as a legacy for Mactalla, and another for the expences of his funeral. All matters being finally arranged, and the duke having solemnly plighted his word that he would, in every instance obey the instructions he had received from him, should there be occasion, which, however, he fervently hoped there might not, they set out for the place of appointment in a carriage, which they dismissed within a few yards of it.

They found Lord O'Sinister and his second already on the ground. Osmond retired to a distance, but the French duke

approached them, and, by his gestures, it seemed to Osmond as if he was again endeavouring to have the business settled in an amicable manner. That, if he had made such an effort, he had failed in it, however, was soon obvious to Osmond, by seeing him and the other second busily employed in loading pistols, with a brace of which the duke shortly joined him, saying—"The man is a savage, he will hearken to no terms of accommodation."

As Osmond took the pistol from the duke, a deep sigh escaped him—not on his own account, however, was it breathed, but on that of the sufferings his family would experience should he fall—the loss they would sustain should he now be torn from them—now that he had every prospect of being able to assist them essentially. His reflections on the subject were interrupted by the duke exclaiming—"My dear friend, what are you about? Lord O'Sinister has taken aim at you—why don't you advance your pistol."

Osmond raised it, but ere he had well drawn the trigger he received a ball in his right arm, which obliged him to drop his weapon, and at the same instant, to his unutterable astonishment, as well as horror, (since he was not conscious of having taken any certain aim at him), he beheld Lord O'Sinister fall !

"Be off," cried the French duke hastily ;  
"for his lordship is shot."

Osmond, however, remained motionless, wildly staring at his fallen opponent. — "My dear friend, proceeded the duke impatiently, "you can do no good by lingering here ; on the contrary, you are preventing that prompt assistance being rendered to his lordship which he requires, for till I see you off, I cannot think of approaching him ; fly, and depend on my instantly joining his second, to see every thing that is requisite done for him."

"Whither shall I fly ?" asked Osmond.

"Do you perceive yonder lonely building ?" cried the duke, pointing to a distant one.

"I do," said Osmond.



“Cross those fields in front of us,” resumed the duke, “and you will find yourself at it; remain there till you see me, which will be as soon as I hear the surgeon’s report of his lordship’s case; should it be a favourable one, you may return to your lodgings, but if the reverse, you must make your escape with all possible expedition, as his lordship has many powerful friends in Naples, who, no doubt, will exert themselves to avenge his death—But see, my friend,” casting his eyes upon the arm of Osmond, which was bleeding fast, “you have also suffered yourself, in this unfortunate rencontre!—Permit me to make use of this handkerchief;” and drawing one from the pocket of Osmond, he bound it round his wound, and then again conjured him to fly.

Osmond turned into the path he had been directed by his grace to take, and advanced forward, but without well knowing what he did. On reaching the building where he was to take shelter, he found it to be a large old barn. The door being partly open, he entered, and having satis-

fied himself that no one was in the place, he closed it, and proceeded to a large heap of straw which he perceived in a corner, and upon which he threw himself, utterly exhausted by emotion and loss of blood; and happy would he have felt at the moment, had he been assured he never should have risen from it—so wretched did he feel on Lord O'Sinister's account, of whose being mortally wounded he had scarcely a doubt from the manner in which he fell. The idea of his having provoked his fate, in no degree abated the horror with which it inspired Osmond; he felt that if his surmises respecting him were true, he never more should know happiness: how to act—whither to betake himself, should they prove so, he knew not, from the distracted state of his mind.

An hour elapsed without any thing occurring to interrupt his agonizing reflections; the door was then suddenly pushed open, and by the faint light it admitted, Osmond beheld three men entering the barn, with something stretched across their arms. A few minutes sufficed to convince

him that they were banditti, and that what they carried was a murdered body.

"Is there any snug hole," demanded one of them, in a true ruffianly accent, "into which we could thrust this old fellow?"

"Oh, let the priest do that for him," said a second; "there is a heap of something yonder—straw, I suppose; let us tumble him on that, and be off for the corpse of his master, for should it be discovered yet awhile, an alarm will be given that may prevent our escape."

"True," cried the third, "no time should be lost in securing it;" and hastening to the corner in which Osmond lay, and which, fortunately for him, was by this time involved in almost total darkness, they threw the body close by him, and departed.

Osmond's first impulse was immediately to fly the place; but a moment's reflection checked his obeying this, by representing to him the likelihood there was of the light without betraying him to the ruffians. He had scarcely made up his

mind to quietly remaining where he was, ere they returned with another body, which they threw, with as little ceremony as they had done the preceding one, upon the straw, and then again withdrew. As soon as they retired, Osmond, anxious to ascertain the directions they took, raised his head from the straw, for the purpose of listening; but from which he was quickly diverted by a faint moan. He started, uncertain whether or not his ear had deceived him—It was repeated, and he no longer doubted its proceeding from one of the bodies that had been flung beside him.—All the horrors of his own situation were now aggravated, by the idea of its preventing him from rendering any assistance to the poor sufferer at hand. While deliberating on the measures he should pursue, the risk he should run of missing the Duke D'Angoumoise, and falling into the power of the banditti, by venturing out on his account, the pushing open of the door again caused him to shrink into the straw, and hold in his breath.

For a few minutes a rustling noise, as of some one groping about, was all he heard ; he then heard some one say, in a low muttering tone—"I certainly saw him enter this place—yes, yes, I am positive I am not mistaken ; here, therefore, will I remain till I have sufficient light to look about me."

This determination was not the most agreeable one in the world to Osmond ; but in a minute after, the uneasiness it gave rise to was dissipated by the exclamation of—"Blessed St. Benedict !" convincing him it was Mactalla who had last entered ; he accordingly pronounced his name, and, in return, heard his own shouted forth, in the most joyful accent. He immediately extricated himself from the straw, and advancing towards the door, was followed thither by Mactalla, whom cautioning to speak in a lower key, he acquainted with the incident that had just occurred, and expressed a wish for him to go out, in quest of assistance for the unfortunate stranger.

“What, and leave you here to be butchered by the ruffians?” demanded Mactalla.

“I don’t imagine there is any danger of their returning,” replied Osmond; “at all events, I am unwilling to quit this at present, lest my doing so should cause me to miss the Duke D’Angoumoise, whom I expect here every moment.”

“The Duke D’Angoumoise!” repeated Mactalla, in a voice expressive of much astonishment, “did he promise to join you here, signor?”

“He did, else I should not expect him.”


“Then take my word for it, signor, ’tis a promise he does not mean to keep.”

“What makes you think so?” asked Osmond.

“I’ll tell you another time, signor,” returned Mactalla, “for here I do not think it very safe for us to have much conversation.”

Osmond imputing to conjecture what he had said relative to the duke, felt still unwilling to quit the barn; but finding him resolved on not leaving it without

him, at length left it, and struck into the road leading from Naples. They had not proceeded far, when they espied a light, glimmering through a grove which skirted one side of the way, and towards which they instantly hastened—Osmond, with a heart fluttering with joy at the idea of being able to procure assistance for the wounded stranger. After advancing some yards, they found themselves before a small low building, almost shrouded in trees, and from a lattice of which still beamed the light that had attracted them to it: but scarcely had they come within sight of it, when an unpleasant idea came across the mind of Osmond, that caused him to pause—It might be, he suddenly reflected, the hiding-place of the banditti he had seen in the barn. Mactalla, too, as if struck by the same idea, also stopped, and catching his master by the skirt of the coat, as if apprehensive of his proceeding, exclaimed in his ear—“Softly, softly, signor; by St. Benedict, we may have only quitted the den, to run into the jaws of the lion himself here.”



“No,” said Osmond, after a short interval of silence, during which he looked about him attentively—“No, there is nothing in the appearance of this place indicative of its being the haunt of persons of the description you allude to ; it looks more like the neat and peaceful abode of some industrious peasant. I will venture, therefore, to knock at it—In the cause of a distressed fellow-creature, he must be selfish indeed who would not run a little risk.”

Ere, however, he applied his hand to the door, he thought it adviseable to listen for a few minutes at it. Mactalla, not satisfied with listening, put his eye to the key-hole, and the instant after, called out in a gentle tone—“Pray, open the door if you please.”

“Do you see any one?” asked Osmond anxiously.

“By the Powers, I do!—one of the prettiest little creatures I ever clapped my eyes on,” replied Mactalla, half raising his head—“Look through the key-hole yourself, signor, to be convinced I only speak truth.”

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Osmond stooped, and beheld through the aperture an old man and a young girl seated at a table in a small neat apartment, their looks directed towards the door, as if they had heard something, and was rather alarmed, of which their being, Osmond was soon convinced by hearing the girl exclaim in a terrified accent—"Grandfather, did you not hear somebody speak? I am sure I did."

"No, child," replied the old man, "it was only the wind, as it rushed through the crevices of the door, you heard."

"By the Powers!" cried Mactalla, who had applied his ear so close to the door as to be able to distinguish perfectly what was passing within, "but you are mistaken, and your grand-daughter is right."

The old man, in a trembling voice, now demanded who was there?—Osmond, in a tone well calculated to still alarm, replied—"Two travellers who have lost their way."

"And who are in momentary expectation of being overtaken by a gang of robbers," rejoined Mactalla, "who have just

dispatched two other travellers, that now lie bleeding in the barn above."

"Alack-a-day! in my barn?" cried the old man with emotion, but without opening the door.

"By St. Benedict, I don't know whether it is your's or not," answered Mac-talla; "but the sooner you open the door, the sooner you'll know."

The door was now cautiously unbarred, and Osmond, at the sight of whose countenance the terror of the old man appeared to vanish, and his impatient valet were admitted.

He briefly related to him the purpose for which they had intruded on him, and entreated, if he had the power, not to delay sending assistance to the unfortunate strangers in the barn.

"Alack-a-day!" cried the old man, shaking his head, "I have not the power of rendering them any assistance; I have nobody here with me but my granddaughter; but if you chuse, she'll shew you to a house not far off, where you'll be able to procure what you require."

“ If you please then,” returned Osmond,  
“ we’ll accept her services.”

The fair Bianca, whose pretty face the gallantry of Mactalla had suffused with blushes, accordingly led the way through a spacious avenue cut through the grove, and bordered with lemon and orange trees, whose delightful exhalations revived the languid senses of Osmond, to a magnificent villa. As concisely as possible, she explained to the porter who admitted them into the hall, the business which had brought her thither, which he had no sooner heard, than he summoned several other domestics for the purpose of getting some of them to hasten to the barn.— Amongst these, Mactalla was agreeably surprised by discovering an old acquaintance, an attendant of the Duke D’Amalfi, in his last visit to Acerenza, and by whom he was at the same instant recognized. Their mutual recognition was the means of discovering to Osmond that the house he was then in belonged to the duke, which Mactalla had no sooner heard than he exclaimed aloud in the most joyful ac-

cent—"We are in luck, we are in luck!—got into the right box after all!" and hastened to inform the servants that his master was the particular friend and favourite of theirs, and that accordingly, the greater attention they paid him, the more they would oblige the latter. Upon hearing which, the steward, a respectable elderly man, was called, who, on learning the intimacy that subsisted between Osmond and his lord, immediately ushered him into an elegant apartment, where refreshments were presently laid before him, whilst several servants were dispatched with lights and cordials to the barn, and orders to bring back the unfortunate strangers, whether dead or alive. The steward perceiving Osmond looking pale and exhausted, proposed his remaining for the night at the villa—a proposal which met with a ready acquiescence, as, till Osmond had heard from the Duke D'Angoumoise, he could not think of venturing back to Naples. On the steward's retiring to give directions for an apartment to be prepared for him,

Osmond turned with impatience towards Mactalla, who had followed and continued in the room with him, and desired to know by what means he had been able to trace him to the barn, and the reason he had for supposing the Duke D'Angoumoise would not fulfil his promise of repairing thither?

"You shall hear, signor," answered Mactalla—"No sooner had I cast my eyes upon the countenance of the Duke D'Angoumoise, who, by the bye, is——"

"My friend," said Osmond, hastily interrupting him, and in a commanding tone, perceiving by the turn of his features that he was about uttering some free remark upon his grace.

Mactalla bowed.—"Well, signor, as I was about saying, no sooner had I looked in his face this morning, when he called upon you, than my mind misgave me something was wrong; so when I quitted the room, I stopped at the door——"

"Guilty of the meanness of listening!" cried Osmond, with a frowning aspect.

Mactalla shook his head, and thus pro-

ceeded—"Well, signor, what I heard then made me return to the same station when the duke came back from Lord O'Sinister, and thus I learnt that you were to meet his lordship this evening, which, to be sure, I can't say I was very sorry to hear, as I expected nothing less than that you would give him the dressing he so richly merited for his conduct to you; so making certain of this, I determined on seeing a little of the fun, and accordingly repaired to the place of appointment, where I hid me behind a hedge, and it was a mercy my laughing did not betray me."

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Osmond, with mingled horror and disgust, "is it possible that you could laugh at the melancholy catastrophe you witnessed there?"

"Why, do you really believe, signor, that you wounded Lord O'Sinister?"

"Do I believe it?" demanded Osmond, "How can I doubt it, after what I saw?"

"Why, to be sure, his lordship did sham a wounded man neatly. He put me in mind of a set of strolling players in the

county of Cork, to whom my grandfather lent an old barn to play in, and who accordingly let me in for nothing. They promised the people, if they came to see them, they'd kill themselves to give them satisfaction ; and to be sure, to all appearance they kept their word, for they had long knives, which they thrust into their sides ; and we were all going away perfectly satisfied, when Tom Murphy, a young friend of mine, whispered in my ear that he saw one of the dead men rise up and walk away, as if nothing at all was the matter with him. I could not believe him ; so perceiving the foot of one of the dead ladies thrust beyond the curtain, I turned back to convince myself all was right, and gave it a gentle pinch, when by the Powers, out she roared, and jumping up, walked quietly off, just as my Lord O'Sinister did when your back was turned — up he got, as nimble as a bee, met the French duke more than half way, shook him heartily by the hand, and then walked off with him and his second ; upon which, here's a humbug ! said I to myself, and

posted after you directly, to let you know the trick that had been played you ; but just as I saw you enter the barn, it came into my head, that they might be again plotting something against you, so I turned back in hopes of overtaking them and hearing what they were saying ; but not being able to discover them in any direction, I returned to you."

"Good Heavens ! what a tale have you told me !" cried Osmond—"How great would be my indignation did I credit it ! but that I cannot do. Your senses must indeed, my good friend, have deceived you, for that such a villainous transaction would be connived at by the Duke D'Angoumoise, who is——"

"A big blackguard !" interrupted Mac-talla, calmly.

"Silence," exclaimed Osmond, passionately ; "I insist upon your not presuming to mention his grace again in a disrespectful manner. I look upon him at present as one of my most sincere friends, and until I have reason to think the contrary,

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will uphold his character even at the risk of my life. You must repair to-morrow morning to Naples, at as early an hour as possible, when I trust you will receive a favourable account of Lord O'Sinister's health."

"Don't doubt it," replied Mactalla.

The steward now re-entered the apartment; he informed Osmond that the two unfortunate strangers had been brought to the villa. The servant was quite dead, he said; but the surgeon, who had been called in to the assistance of the master, entertained hopes of his recovery. He had been put to bed, he added, and every thing done that was requisite for him.

This information afforded Osmond very great pleasure. The steward's attention was now called to his wounded arm, from which his own and Mactalla's had been diverted, by the conversation that had just passed between them—The surgeon was brought in to dress it. The ball had lodged in a fleshy part of the arm, so that it was easily extracted. While the wound

was dressing, Mactalla did nothing but rage at the vile trick which he persisted in saying had been played upon his master.

"Those were a desperate set of ruffians whom you were so unfortunate as to fall in with, signor," said the surgeon, while employed about the arm of Osmond, taking it for granted, as did the steward, that he had been wounded by those who attacked the other travellers.

"Desperate!" repeated Mactalla, "aye, that you may say with a witness—who could have thought that a lord and a duke would have been guilty of such villainy?"

"A lord and a duke!" cried the surgeon, with a wild stare of astonishment, "capable of waylaying and murdering people!"

"Yes," returned Mactalla; "but, by the Powers, they shall pay for their tricks."

"Really, my friend, you have strongly excited my curiosity," said the surgeon—"will you be so good as to give me the particulars of the affair?"

“Oh, willingly,” cried Mactalla. “You must know,” drawing a little nearer to him, “that there is now in Naples an old thief called Lord O’Sinister, and a sly rogue of a Frenchman, ealled the duke D’Angoumoise. These——”

Here he caught a glance, so expressive of anger and resentment, from his master, as to put a stop to all further communication on the subject, to the great disappointment of the surgeon, as his looks testified. The moment he had retired with the steward — “Gracious Heaven!” exclaimed Osmond, in the most impatient accent, addressing Mactalla, “knowing as you do, the predicament in which I at present stand with regard to Lord O’Sinister, how could you be so imprudent as to give a hint of what has happened, to the surgeon? I may probably be deprived of my liberty in consequence of your having done so; since, no doubt, if his lordship be declared in a dangerous way, an immediate search will be made after me.”

Here Mactalla turned aside, evidently


to suppress a laugh, which so exasperated Osmond, that with difficulty he forbore ordering him from the room.

The steward soon returned, and Osmond shortly after was conducted to the chamber prepared for him; but though fatigued both in body and mind, the occurrences of the day had made too deep, too dreadful an impression upon him, to permit of his sleeping for a considerable time.—In consequence of his restless night, his slumbers were protracted to a late hour in the morning. On awaking, he found Mactalla by the bedside. He arose immediately, and, as he was dressing, inquired whether he was yet thinking of going to Naples?

“Thinking!” repeated Mactalla, “I have been there already, and am just come back.”

“Well, well,” cried Osmond, faltering through emotion, and looking anxiously in his face—“What news of Lord O’Sinister?”

“Ah! he’s in a bad way,” answered Mactalla.



“Gracious Heaven !” exclaimed Osmond, in a tone of anguish, and clasping his hands together ; “and the Duke D’Angoumoise——”

“Oh ! by the Powers, ’tis all over with him.”

“He has fled, I presume,” cried Osmond, looking still more earnestly in the face of Mactalla.

“Faith you have hit the right nail on the head,” replied the other coolly.

“What will become of him ?” exclaimed Osmond, almost distracted about him.

“He’ll go to the devil,” returned Mactalla, with the same coolness with which he had just before spoken.

“Good God !” cried Osmond, casting his eyes towards heaven, “why did I accept his offers of service ? why did I employ him in such a business ?”

“Aye, why did you indeed ?” said Mactalla—“Such were the very words I made use of to the bankers—Gentlemen says I, why did he employ such a fellow ?—why did’nt he entrust me with his money, in-

stead of putting it into the hands of a foreigner—a——”

“What bankers?—what money do you mean?” cried Osmond, wildly staring at Mactalla.

“Read this,” said Mactalla, very composedly taking a letter from his waistcoat pocket, and presenting it to him, “it will inform you better than I can.”


“A letter!” exclaimed Osmond, as with a trembling hand he took it from him; “where did you get it?”

“I got it at the Duke D’Angoumoise’s lodgings—He had the complaisance to leave it there for you.”

Osmond, with increased emotion, broke the seal, and read as follows :

“SIR,

“That on first hearing of my conduct, your rage and indignation will be beyond bounds, I make no doubt; but equally am I convinced, that as soon as reason resumes her usual empire over you, and you are again enabled to reflect with coolness, the anger and resentment with



which it inspires you, will, in a great measure, be overcome by the consideration of the useful lesson it affords you.

“As, without experience, 'tis scarcely possible to pass through life with safety, so the sooner a man acquires what is so requisite to guide him through its shoals and quicksands, the better ; and the more dearly he pays for it, the greater is the likelihood of its making a due impression on him.

“Instead, therefore, of regretting your acquaintance with me, and the dross it has been the means of depriving you of, you should rather rejoice at the circumstance, from the knowledge you have acquired by it. The distrust with which it will doubtless inspire you of mankind in general, the diffidence of your own judgment, (a too presumptuous opinion of which is the great bane of youth,) will, in all probability, save you from still greater deprivations.

“But to prove to you that I am not so callous and unprincipled as, at first hearing of my conduct, you may be led to

imagine, I solemnly assure you, that though from having been the victim of deception myself in many instances, I think it but fair to retaliate upon mankind in general, the numerous wrongs I have received at their hands, by taking advantage of them whenever I can—I should have spared you, (so much did your candour and sensibility please me,) but for imperious necessity. . . As some atonement for abusing the confidence you reposed in me, permit me to inform you, that you need be under no uneasiness with regard to Lord O'Sinister—the pistol I delivered into your hands was not loaded. His motive for wishing you to believe him mortally wounded, is to induce you to quit Naples, which he has some powerful reasons, best known to himself, for wishing you to leave.—His acquaintance and mine commenced some years back, and was renewed on our unexpectedly meeting a few days since.—After what I have said, it can scarcely be necessary to add, that it was at his instigation I threw myself in your way, for the purpose of endeavouring to involve you



in some difficulty, which should oblige you to comply with his wishes—visited you in prison, and afterwards prevailed upon you to meet him in a hostile manner.

“ I shall intrude no further on your time, than merely to say, that should circumstances ever permit, I shall most assuredly, return you the money I have now deprived you of, and that, but for your own credulity, you never would have sustained such a loss. In future, admit no stranger to your confidence—to look with an eye of suspicion on all—to believe that every man you meet is a villain, watching, like a tiger with extended talons, for a favourable opportunity of springing on his prey, is the only way of travelling with safety through this bad world ; do this, and you may defy the very devil himself, which is Lord O'Sinister. Accept the assurance of my high consideration ; and amongst your friends, be assured you have not one who more truly estimates your worth than

THE DUKE D'ANGOUMOISE.”

“What a character!” exclaimed Osmond, letting the letter drop from his hand.

“He’s a complete big villain,” cried Mactalla, stooping to pick it up.

“A villain, indeed!” echoed Osmond, as he walked about the room, in an agitation impossible to be described.

“That he is,” rejoined the other, “to run away with the hundred pounds you intended for me when you died.”

“Don’t mention that, ’tis nothing to the rest,” cried Osmond, indignantly waving his hand.

“No, to be sure, I know ’tis nothing compared to eight hundred pounds,” replied Mactalla: then after a pause—“But I am not in the least surprised at what has happened, for I saw by Monsieur’s phiz that he was a sly dog, and always disliked him as much as I do the rest of the French fellows. By St. Benedict, when I was at Paris, I was often tempted to give some of them a good kicking—There you’d see a fellow bowing and scraping to you, and grinning full in your face, as if he was your

most humble servant ; and the next instant catch him winking at another, as much as to say he had humbugged you. The Marchesa Morati had a fellow of this kind, and one day he took it into his head to make game of me, as he thought, behind my back ; but it happened to be before my face—a few gentle kicks, however, made Mr. Friseur change his tone, and gallop off faster than he came.”

“ Pray,” demanded Osmand, suddenly and angrily, “ what induced you to sport with my feelings, by telling me Lord O’Sinister was in a bad way ?”

Mactalla looked earnestly at him for a moment—“ I merely meant, signor,” replied he, “ that he was in a bad way with regard to his soul.”

“ And the bankers,” added Osmond.

“ Why, that on hearing the Duke D’Angoumoise had quitted his lodgings, I repaired to them, in hopes of saving your money ; but it was too late ; he had returned the order you received from them on England, and got your hard cash in exchange for it.”

“What deliberate villainy!” cried Osmond, with uplifted hands.

“Yes, yes, deliberate enough,” said Mactalla; “he was sure of his game, so did every thing quietly and coolly—I wish to the Lord I had been at his elbow, when he was sliding into his pocket the hundred pounds I was to have got after your death.”

“Psha!” returned Osmond, impatiently, “let me hear no more of that; in some way or other, I shall endeavour to reward you for your services.”

“Oh! if it comes to that, hang the dirty money, say I—by the Powers, Ned Mactalla values money as little as any lord in the kingdom.”

The steward now made his appearance to inquire after Osmond’s health, and whether he was yet disposed for breakfast?—Osmond, for form’s sake, replying to this question in the affirmative, (the French duke’s letter having deprived him at the moment of all appetite), was ushered into an elegant saloon, where the morning repast was prepared for him, and at which the steward would

attend. Disturbed and perplexed, so that to make an effort to enter into conversation was painful in the extreme, Osmond would gladly have dispensed with his attendance; but finding he could not prevent this without giving offence, he forced himself to enter into discourse with him, in the course of which he learnt, that besides the present villa, the Duke D'Amalfi had several others, still more splendid and beautiful, to which whenever state affairs would allow of his leaving the metropolis, he was wont to repair with select parties. Soon after breakfast the steward withdrew, having previously, however, requested Osmond not to think yet awhile of returning to Naples—a request which Osmond had no hesitation in promising to comply with, as, in the present state of his mind, the idea of entering into any thing like a busy scene was insupportable to him. Left to himself, his thoughts immediately reverted to the conduct of Lord O'Sinister and the French duke: for that of the former he could assign no cause whatever; it ap-

peared to him as inexplicable as vile—for the latter, the letter which had disclosed it had fully explained the motives to which it was owing—"Detestable wretch," he exclaimed, as he re-perused this letter, "thy advice is not less odious than thy conduct—Thou wouldst, if thou couldst, corrupt as well as deceive; but never, I trust, will that suspicion thou counsellest me to harbour find admission to my breast—that suspicion which is the certain precursor of guilt; for he who imagines every man his enemy, will naturally become the enemy of every man."

His passion by degrees subsiding, during the first paroxysm of which he had meditated pursuing the Duke D'Angoumoise, and bringing him to the punishment he merited, he finally decided, after a little deliberation, on relinquishing this intention, and leaving him to the avenging hand of Heaven; reflection convincing him, that he could not divulge his baseness without implicating Lord O'Sinister, whose conduct the consideration of the obligations he believed

his family owed him, rendered him unwilling to expose to public censure.

His meditations were broken in upon by the surgeon coming to dress his arm—He spoke favourably of it, as also of the wounds of the stranger. On his retiring, Osmond was about to repair to a beautiful garden, into which the saloon opened when Mactalla abruptly entered the apartment, and stopped him.

“By St. Benedict, signor, cried he, almost out of breath, “but the old gentleman, whose life you have been instrumental in saving, has become (in spite of every body in the house) a walking ghost. On regaining his recollection, and learning the means by which he had been brough hither, I was called, at his particular request, for the purpose of letting him know to whom he was indebted, which I had no sooner done, than up he would get to see you.”

“Good Heavens!” exclaimed Osmond, “surely he should have been informed, that to see me, it was not requisite for him to rise.”

“So he was, signor ; but he would not be persuaded to the contrary, and is now in the gallery adjoining his chamber ; nor will he be laid again (that is, in bed, I mean) till he has seen you.”

“Conduct me instantly to him,” said Osmond ; “ his rashness may prove fatal to him.”

Mactalla obeyed. On their reaching the gallery he withdrew, and Osmond advancing down it, found the stranger on a couch at the further end. He seemed to be upwards of sixty, and what with the paleness and langour which his wounds had occasioned, the grey locks that thinly shaded his forehead, and a look of deep melancholy, which seemed to say it was something more than the hand of time that had planted wrinkles there, and bent his noble form, appeared altogether one of the most interesting objects he had ever seen.

On Osmond's drawing near him, he attempted to rise, but was prevented by Osmond's hurrying forward, and gently laying hold of his arm—“ My preserver !)” he



then exclaimed in a broken voice, and fastening his eyes with a kind of wild earnestness upon his countenance—"My ——" his bosom heaved with convulsive sobs, and hastily averting his head, he burst into tears.

## CHAP. II.

“ Then such deep sighs heav’d from his woeful heart,  
As if his sorrowful soul  
Had crack’d the strings of life, and burst away.”

LEE.

“ MY dear sir,” said Osmond, in a soothing accent, and seating himself beside him, not a little shocked at his emotion, “ pray endeavour to compose yourself; recollect the weak state you are at present in, and do not give way to feelings that cannot fail of injuring you. Allow me to assist you to your chamber, and I will remain there as long as you please.”

“ Oh, from thee—from thee this consideration for me !” cried the agitated invalid, smiting his bosom, and elevating his

eyes towards heaven ; then, after a pause, turning them again upon Osmond, " be not uneasy," he added ; " my present feelings will not injure me, for they are the delicious offspring of gratitude—gratitude for what, but for a short time ago, I thought I never more should have experienced. But say," his eyes wandering from the countenance of Osmond, and suddenly resting on his arm, " say," with an emotion that shook his whole frame, " wert thou not wounded in my defence ?"

" Would that it had been in so just a cause," said Osmond, emphatically.

" Ah, now I remember," returned the stranger, " your servant informed me it was by the hand of a villain, whom you once considered as a friend."

" Even so," replied Osmond.

" And what is the name of this villain ?" demanded the stranger, in a tone of vehemence, which, considering the state he was in, astonished Osmond ; " reveal it," cried he, his eyes kindling with passion, " that he may receive the punishment his treachery merits. I have power, and I have

inclination to avenge your wrongs," gently pressing, as he spoke, the arm of his young preserver.

"His name is sacred," returned Osmond; "the hand which wounded me was once extended in kindness to my family, and that consideration will for ever prevent my seeking to revenge the injury it has done me."

"Oh my—my preserver!" again burst from the evidently struggling bosom of the old man, and for an instant he hid his face against the shoulder of Osmond; then raising it, but still grasping his arm, "this generosity—this nobleness," he cried, "will not go unrewarded. Oh, God!" suddenly raising his hands and eyes towards heaven, while a faint colour flushed his cheek, "my penitence is accepted by thee, else wouldst thou not," and meekly crossing his arms upon his breast, he bowed his head in token of humility and thankfulness, "permit me to experience such an hour as this. My son," he added, again directing his looks to the astonished Osmond, "I see my emotion startles thee ;

more, it inclines thee to believe my senses disordered ; but trust me they are not ; could I boast of my conduct being as perfect as they are, I should be a much happier man than I now am ; but——”

“ Pardon me, sir,” cried Osmond, “ for interrupting you ; but really I cannot forbear again entreating you to retire to repose.”

“ I will in a few minutes ; but ere I do, permit me to ask you a few questions relative to yourself. Your servant, besides telling me your name, informed me that you had not been long in Naples, but that it was your intention to settle here : what could induce your family to submit to such a measure—submit to part with such a son ?”

“ Imperious necessity,” answered Osmond.

The stranger started—“ Are they then unfortunate ?” he demanded.

“ If those can be styled so who are in possession of domestic happiness. The source of all their felicity—love, has also been the source of all their misery.”

“From your words I should infer your parents married against the consent of their friends.”

Osmond bowed.

“And have they never been able to obtain a reconciliation with them?”

Osmond looked earnestly in his countenance; its expression, however, so thoroughly convinced him that it was not impertinent curiosity which dictated the inquiries he addressed to him, that after a little hesitation, he replied to his last question.

“And do they not curse those obdurate relatives?” asked the stranger in a hurried accent.

“Curse them!” repeated Osmond; “curse the authors of their being! they forgive, they pity their obduracy—for of what sweet enjoyments has it not been the means of depriving them!”


“True—most true,” returned the other, in an inward tone, and again striking his breast with a look of unutterable anguish. “Here, indeed, the crime carries the punishment along with it. Oh, for such

a crime, for denying forgiveness to a sup-  
plicating child, what sufferings can atone !”

“ Dear sir,” said Osmond, alarmed by  
his increasing emotion, “ pray allow me to  
support you to your chamber.”

“ Do with me as thou wilt,” cried he,  
throwing himself on the neck of Osmond,  
and feebly straining him to his bosom,  
“ for thou art—thou art !”—his utterance  
failed him as he attempted to proceed, a  
deadly paleness overspread his countenance,  
his eyes closed, and he fainted in the arms  
of Osmond.

Shocked beyond expression, Osmond  
gently laid him upon the couch, and  
hastened to procure assistance for him.  
He was carried to his bed, and immediately  
undressed ; but a length of time elapsed  
ere he shewed any symptoms of returning  
animation. On reviving it was evident to  
all that his senses were deranged. Osmond  
requested the surgeon might directly be  
sent for, and then withdrew from the  
chamber to the garden, in hopes the air  
would remove the languor and depression  
he experienced.



The villa was seated on a lofty promontory, embosomed in woods, and commanding an extensive view of the bay and the adjacent country. In another frame of mind, and Osmond would have been transported even to enthusiasm by the richly diversified prospects it overlooked; but now his eye roved almost unconsciously over the picturesque scenery, so much were his thoughts engrossed by recent occurrences—the cruel enmity of Lord O'Sinister, the perfidy of the Frenchman, and the strange conduct of the old gentleman. That the senses of the latter had been disordered from the very commencement of their conversation, or else that he had, by some look or expression, awakened some agonizing remembrances in his bosom, he could not help imagining. It struck him, from his broken sentences, that he was some obdurate parent, who too late had become contrite for his cruelty to his offspring—too late perceived—

“That revenge, though sweet at first, bitter ere long, back on itself recoils.”

His reflections were interrupted by the




surgeon, who, as soon as he had visited the unfortunate stranger, came to inform him what he thought of his patient. He pronounced him at present in a high fever, evidently brought on by violent agitation, the least renewal of which could not fail, he asserted, of proving fatal to him.

This information made Osmond bitterly deplore having suffered himself to be prevailed on to converse so long with him. In the midst of his regrets on the subject, he was joined by the steward, who came to tell him that the old gentleman was again calling for him, and insisting on another interview.

“Then to put an end to all further importunity on that head,” said Osmond, “I will immediately quit the villa, since after hearing the surgeon’s report of his case, I should conceive myself accessory to his death, if I at present complied with his wishes.”

He then, in case the unhappy invalid should need pecuniary assistance on recovering, gave his written address to the steward, with an injunction to deliver it to



him as soon as he got better. He also having thanked the good man for the kind attention which he had experienced at his hands, and which he assured him he should mention to his lord, the Duke D'Amalfi, in the terms it merited, requested him to have the goodness to send Mactalla to him.

He immediately withdrew for the purpose, but returned in a few minutes.—

“Your servant is not at present within, signor,” said he, “but I have dispatched a messenger for him.”

“What can possibly have taken him hence?” asked Osmond.

“What, I make no doubt, will excuse his absence to you, signor—love!” cried the steward, smiling; “the pretty granddaughter of old Guiseppe, the shepherd, who directed you hither last night, has quite smitten him, and he has hied him to her cottage, to tell her, I suppose, of her conquest.”

“Foolish fellow,” said Osmond; “he should consider, ere he suffers himself to fall in love, or make love, whether his

situation will admit of his marrying, whether——”

Certain recollections stopped all further censure on poor Mactalla, and crimsoned his cheeks with blushes, for animadverting on what he had himself been guilty of.—“Ah,” thought he, as he turned aside to conceal from the steward the confusion, which the reflection gave rise to, “how apt are we all to forget our own errors; how carefully should we review our own conduct, ere we permit ourselves to censure that of others.”

Mactalla quickly appeared, and was ordered by his master to procure him either a carriage or horses immediately to return to Naples, an order which he received with a deep sigh. In the course of half an hour he returned to say that a chaise was at the door, and a horse for himself.

“Then get yourself ready to depart directly.”

“Ready, signor!” Mactalla repeated, in an accent expressive of surprise; “I am ready now.”

“Why surely you cannot think of riding

with one boot and a slipper on," said Osmond, pointing, as he spoke, to the legs of Mactalla.

"I have got a wound," returned Mactalla, sighing grievously as he stooped down to examine them, "and that's the reason, I suppose, why I forgot the other boot; but I'll get it on in a minute," and he was hurrying from the room, when Osmond, concluding the wound he spoke of was in his leg, caught him by the arm.

"No, no, my friend," cried he, "God forbid that I could be capable of consciously letting any one put themselves to pain on my account; you shall dismiss the horse, and ride in the carriage with me to Naples."

Mactalla cast a look full of gratitude on his master, his eyes swam in tears, and for an instant he appeared unable to speak; then heaving a deep sigh—"I fancy, signor," said he, "I may venture on horseback, for my wound is here," laying his hand on his heart.

"Oh, now I understand you," returned Osmond, laughing; "yes, yes, since your

wound is there, you may, as you say, venture on horseback, so hasten to put on your boot; and here," drawing forth his purse, "take this money, and distribute it, at your own discretion, amongst the servants."

Mactalla retired, but in a few minutes returned to say he was ready to depart. Osmond was attended to the carriage by the steward, whom he again thanked for the civility and kindness he had experienced from him, and reminded of the paper he had entrusted to his care for the unhappy stranger.

As soon as he found himself again in possession of his apartments at the hotel, he sat down to transcribe the French Duke's letter, for the purpose of sending a copy of it to Lord O'Sinister, the idea of letting his lordship suppose he had completely imposed upon him being insupportable. Besides, he flattered himself revealing to him his knowledge of his villainy would be a means of preventing any further repetition of it, by inducing

him to believe that henceforward he should find him on his guard.

The next day he received a summons to the Duke D'Amalfi, with whom he had a long interview, and was fully instructed in the duties of the situation his excellency had appointed him to. He acquainted his excellency with his having been indebted to the hospitality of his domestics, but carefully avoided all such particulars of his recent adventure as could create a suspicion of the loss he had sustained, or the baseness of Lord O'Sinister. The first he was unwilling to let his excellency know, lest he should conceive the divulgement owing to interested motives, and the second for reasons already mentioned.

From this period he became a frequent visitor at the Amalfi palace, and thus had opportunities of acquiring many elegant and agreeable acquaintances: he had besides quite as much leisure as he could desire in consequence of his situation being almost a sinecure, for the pursuit of the studies he delighted in, and excursions

to all the celebrated places about Naples, so gratifying to a person of classic taste and vivid imagination. In short, at this period his fortunes again began to assume a smiling aspect, and but for certain recollections and considerations, he might have been pronounced in a happy, and of course an enviable situation. He could not forget the fair Cordelia, and he feared he should no more behold her, at least till too late for the kind intentions of her mother respecting them to be realized.

Three weeks passed pleasantly away without any thing occurring worthy of notice, during which he sent several times to inquire after the health of the wounded stranger, whom he at length had the satisfaction of hearing pronounced out of danger, but still in so weak a state as to be interdicted seeing any one, but those whose attendance upon him was absolutely requisite.

While Osmond was thus agreeably spending his time, Mactalla was not idle. He formed many acquaintances amongst the great men of great men, in the number of which was Mr. Jenkins, the confi-

dant and prime agent in all matters of villainy of Lord O'Sinister. This honourable gentleman had latterly become extremely jealous of a needy adventurer, styling himself a German Count, though his ignorance and audacity evidently bespoke him of low origin, whom Lord O'Sinister, since his arrival at Naples, had taken into his confidence, and of course pay, to the great diminution of his, Mr. Jenkins's emoluments. After devising many schemes to ruin him with his employer, but not one of which succeeded, he at length hit upon one, which could not but answer he thought; this was to betray to Mactalla a plot which they had concerted against Osmond, and thus cause its frustration, in such a manner as should lead the peer to believe it entirely owing to the mismanagement of the German, and accordingly induce him to dismiss him from his service.

In pursuance of this resolution, he informed Mactalla that Lord O'Sinister, finding he could not banish Osmond from Naples, of his motives for desiring to do



which he pleaded ignorance, had come to a determination of attempting his life, by means of the German Count, who, in order to obtain an opportunity of taking it in such a way as should prevent his being involved in any disagreeable consequences, had been instructed to seek him out, for the purpose of fastening a quarrel on him.

“ Having in vain, however, for some time past sought him at the different public places he was known to frequent,” pursued Jenkins, “ it has at length been settled, that the count, as he styles himself, (though I am convinced he has no more right to call himself so than either you or I have) should write to him immediately, accusing him of having mentioned his name in a disrespectful manner, of which his having done so a man is already provided to swear, and demanding satisfaction for the same. Neither denial nor remonstrance on the subject are to be attended to; a duel they are determined to provoke; and the count’s second is to play your master the same trick with regard to the pistols, which the French Duke did.”

"Is the person of my master," asked Mactalla, whose countenance underwent various contortions while listening to Jenkins, "known to the German count, or the fellow he has got to bear evidence for him?"

"No," replied Jenkins, "'tis utterly unknown to them; the count was attended to the different places in which he sought him by Lord O'Sinister in disguise."

"His Lordship, I suppose, thought you too conscientious to employ you in this pretty business," said Mactalla, in rather an ironical tone, and viewing Mr. Jenkins askance.

"I only know," returned Jenkins, "that, like many other people in the world, he thinks more highly of new favourites than he does of old ones. The German is every thing with him now; but I am mistaken if I have not done the rascal's business for him—yes, I am convinced the failure of the scheme now in agitation against your master will occasion his dismissal, as my lord will doubtless attribute it to his bungling; but remember, my dear friend,

in putting your master up to ther villainy, you take care not to involve me in any scrape."

Mactalla nodded significantly, and then desired to know at what time the letter he had spoken of might be expected?

"In the course of the ensuing morning," Jenkins replied.

Mactalla again nodded, and they soon after separated, but not without Jenkins requesting to be timely apprised of his master's plans with respect to the German, that he might have the satisfaction of witnessing his disappointment and disgrace.

The rage and indignation of Mactalla at the nefarious plot contrived against his master were so great, that on parting with Mr. Jenkins, he felt strongly tempted to repair to a magistrate, disclose the whole affair to him, and have Lord O'Sinister and his vile agents taken up, as his intended murderers. When he came to reflect, however, on the consummate art of which his lordship was possessed, the weight which his rank and fortune would give to whatever he said, and the little probability

there was of Jenkins being prevailed on to bear evidence against him, he abandoned this intention, as one more likely to injure than to serve his master. Yet to let his lordship and his hirelings entirely escape punishment was not to be thought of. After much deliberation on the subject, he at length, having fully persuaded himself that he never could work upon his master to do what he wished on the present occasion, formed the resolution of taking the affair entirely into his own hands, and of course concealing it from him.—“I will, I will,” he cried, capering about as the idea struck him; “I’ll manage it entirely myself, for he’s by the half too quiet for such big rogues; I’ll try if I can’t cure them of playing any more tricks upon travellers.”

He accordingly, in pursuance of this resolution, kept a look-out for the expected letter, which at an early hour the ensuing morning he received from the hands of a waiter. He directly withdrew with it to his own chamber, where having perused it, he replied to it in the name of his master

appointing the count, who in his billet merely expressed a wish for a private conference with Osmond, to call upon him at one o'clock, an hour at which he knew his master would be engaged with the Duke D'Amalfi.

As soon as Osmond had set out for his excellency's, Mactalla attired himself in a suit of his clothes, and then repaired to the drawing-room, to await the coming of his expected visitor. The interval of expectation was chiefly employed by him in contemplating his figure in the glass, and admiring the fashionable air his master's clothes had given him.—“By St. Benedict,” cried he, as he gazed upon himself, “but it's a true saying, that fine feathers make fine birds; if I hadn't known who my father was, I should certainly have passed for a gentleman in my own eyes now.”

The count was punctual to his appointment; he was ushered into the drawing-room by a lad whom Mactalla had engaged, and properly instructed for the occasion. After the usual salutations were over—“I have waited upon you, sir,” said

the count, in a gruff tone, and with a frowning aspect, "about a very unpleasant business."

"I am sorry to hear that," replied Mactalla, coolly.

"Yes, sir, upon an affair," and the German tried to look important, "which I am afraid will not end but with the sacrifice of one—it may be both our lives."

"Then we are likely to have tight work of it," observed Mactalla.

"Come, come, sir, this light manner of speaking is unbecoming the affair in hand, and can answer no other end than to render still more severe the chastisement you have provoked from me."

"For what, will you be kind enough to tell me?" said Mactalla.

"For what!" repeated the German; "do you then pretend to be ignorant of the injury you have done me, by publicly traducing my character, sir?"

"And pray who may have told you I did that?" asked Mactalla, with a smile, and the most perfect coolness.

"Who! I have my witness at hand,

sir," and as he spoke he hastily advanced to the door, and gave admission to a fellow who had accompanied him to the hole.— "This, sir," cried he, pointing to the ruffian, as he advanced into the room, for such both the business he had come upon, and his appearance, proclaimed him to be, "is the gentleman—a gentleman I must premise to you of the strictest honour and veracity, who heard you the other evening, in a public room, call me a gambler and a swindler."

"Well, if he had," said Mactalla, "I dare say he'd have heard what he couldn't have given the lie to."

"What, this to my face!" thundered out the German; "but you shall pay dearly for thus aggravating the insult you have offered me; yes, yes, you shall know that the Count Schwarten. Gluckstade Languesala is not a person to be offended with impunity; if you don't agree to give me the satisfaction a gentleman has a right to insist upon on such an occasion, I'll post you for a coward, and inflict manual chastisement upon you wherever and

whenever I meet you ; yes, I'll teach you what it is" pacing the room as he spoke, in a seeming rage, " to offend a man of honour—I'll——"

" Softly, softly," interrupted Mactalla, " what signifies putting yourself into such a passion ? can't you take a pattern by me, man ? Don't you see how quiet and easy I am ? Whenever I am angry, I always make it a point to keep myself cool, that I may be able to do what I wish with pleasure to myself and friends. From what you have said, I suppose I am to understand that you wish for an opportunity of driving a bullet through my body ?"

" Just so, sir—just so," replied the German.

" And why not say so in a quiet civil way ?" said Mactalla ; " one word would just have done as well as a hundred."

" Sir, wrongs like mine are enough to make any man speak."

" Aye, and fight too, it should seem," rejoined Mactalla—" And so, Mr. what's your name," turning to the count's ac-



accomplice, "you positively say you heard me the other night, abusing your good friend here, Count—Count—oh! by the Powers, his godfathers and godmothers gave him too many names for me to remember them."

"I'll swear it," returned the ruffian.

"Oh, you need not give yourself the trouble," cried Mactalla, coolly; "your word will be believed as readily as your oath at any time, I am sure."

"Yes, sir," vociferated the German, "as sure as your name is Munro, he heard you traduce my character; so no more trifling, but say at once, will you give me the satisfaction I require for the injury?"

"Only point out a snug private place to meet you in," said Mactalla, "and I strike your man."

The count turned to his companion, and after a little consultation, a lonely field, at a little distance from the city, was the place appointed for Mactalla to meet him in, in the course of an hour.

"And as to seconds," continued the

count," we may as well dispense with the attendance of all but this gentleman," glancing at his friend.

Mactalla nodded, as if perfectly satisfied with this arrangement; and the count having previously charged him to be punctual, withdrew with his companion.

The instant they were gone, Mactalla took off his master's clothes, and enveloped himself in a great coat, beneath which he concealed a large oak stick he had purchased for the occasion. With the then lad already mentioned, driving before him a mule furnished with two large panniers, he proceeded to the place of appointment. Within a few yards of it he caused the lad to retire with the mule behind a large clump of trees, and, unaccompanied, advanced towards the count, who with his second had preceded him to the ground.

He very quietly suffered all the usual preparations for a duel to be made; but on the pretended second presenting him with a pistol, he in return laid him pros-

trate at his feet, with a blow of his oak cudgel, and then rushing upon the count, seized him by the collar, and dashed the other pistol from his grasp.

“What’s this for—what’s this for;” roared out the struggling count, in a terrified accent, and with the ghastliness of cowardice and conscious guilt.

“Merely to shew you,” returned Mac-talla, “how the boys in the county of Cork treat such big blackguards as you are.”

So saying, he fell upon the German just as if it was a sack of corn he had to thrash, between every stroke he laid upon him exclaiming—“This is the way, this is the way,” to the unutterable amusement of Mr. Jenkins, who having called upon him at the hotel, and heard what was about taking place, had followed his steps, for the purpose of witnessing the disgrace and disappointment of his rival with Lord O’Sinister.

The unfortunate German danced, capered, roared, supplicated, and finally protested he would have justice.

“Be easy man, be easy,” cried Mactalla, “aint I administering justice as fast as I can? you would have done me an injury, and I in return am inflicting a little gentle chastisement upon you, and if this is not justice, the devil is in’t.”

The count’s companion, who had merely received a blow across the shoulders, quickly recovered his legs; but perceiving Jenkins, and concluding he was come to the assistance of Mactalla, he took to his heels.

Mactalla at length pretty well satisfied with the flagellation he had bestowed on the count, threw him on the ground, and pulling some cords from his pocket, began tying his hands and legs. While doing this—“Aye, aye, Mr. Count,” he cried, “by the Powers, but I think you’ll be more careful for the future how you get yourself into the hands of my countrymen; you’ll not be in a hurry again, I think, to hire yourself to blow out the brains of an innocent man.—By St. Benedict, I’d give all I am like to be worth these ten years, to have an opportunity of giving just such

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another dressing to the old rascal who employed you ; but his turn will come yet—some time or other he'll meet with his deserts."

Having finished binding the count, he called to the lad to lead forward the mule, which being done, he seated Count Schwer-tan Gluckstade Languesala in one of the panniers, to the great delight of Mr. Jenkins, who clapping him on the shoulder, exclaimed in an exulting tone—"By the Powers, as you say yourself, my dear friend, but you have done the business."

"Neatly, I think," cried Mactalla, smiling and rubbing his hands, "neatly ; but it's not quite finished yet."

"No ! why what remains to be done ?"

"Why, to balance the count with as great a scoundrel as himself," and as he spoke he closed with Mr. Jenkins, tripped up his heels in a moment, and producing some more cord, began binding him as he had done the count.

"Are you mad, are you mad ?" roared out Jenkins.

"No, neither so mad nor so stupid, as

not to know that you played the part of second to that abominable old villain, your master, when he attempted the life of mine, and that with all your heart you would have entered into this second plot against him had you been required. Knowing this, you may therefore bless your stars that I let you off so easily ; if you have any regard for your back, I advise you to let me know in time, any roughtish schemes that may be formed against him."

Then, in spite of all his entreaties and struggles, he placed him in the other pannier, and ordered the lad to drive forward the mule.

Thus did Mactalla enter Naples, and proceed to the house of Lord O'Sinister, in the Largo Castilio. He knocked at the door in the true style of a precursor of a carriage, in consequence of which the porter fully expected an equipage was approaching ; but not perceiving one, he, after staring a few minutes in silence at Mactalla, inquired, in rather an angry



tone, what had made him knock in such a manner?

"Are you blind," asked Maetalla, "that you don't see your master's friends?"

"Where?" demanded the porter, as did also several other servants, who were lounging about the hall.

"Why, yonder," replied Maetalla, pointing to the mule, "in that new-fashioned carriage."

The bursts of laughter which issued from the servants, at the sight he thus presented to their view—a sight rendered doubly delectable by the hatred they bore Mr. Jenkins and the count, quickly drew the rest of the domestics to the door, who sharing in their mirth, the uproar became so great as to attract Lord O'Sinister to a balcony, to learn the occasion of it. Maetalla no sooner espied his lordship, than retreating a little way from the door, so as to command a good view of him, he took off his hat and made him a profound reverence; after which he smiled significantly in his face, and pointed with

his thumb over his shoulder to the mule. Then turning round, with the assistance of the boy, he took off the panniers, and, to use his own words, quietly and coolly emptied their contents upon the flags; after which he again saluted his lordship, with the same air of ironical respect he had before done, and retired, followed by the shouts and acclamations of the servants, and, we may also believe, the anathemas of his lordship.

On his return to the hotel, he found his master arrived before him, and heard that he had been inquiring for him—"I can't help it," cried he, in reply to a waiter, who informed him he did not appear pleased at finding him absent; "a man can't be here, and there, and every where, at once."

"What's the matter?" asked Osmond, who had overheard these words, as he entered the room.

"Matter!—matter enough have I had upon my hands this blessed day, or I wonder at it," returned he—"By the Powers, but that count what-do-you-call-him is

a stout strong fellow—if he had been born in England or Ireland, where he'd have got a little courage from the example of others, I shouldn't have found it quite so easy a matter to trounce him as I did ; but as it was, I think, I have trimmed his jacket neatly for him.—Ha, ha, Mr. Scowerten Backslide Long-as-a-sallet—that you are, as long as twenty of them, you'll not be in a hurry again, I think, to undertake such a barbarous business."

"What do you mean?" demanded Osmond with quickness, and turning round to survey him.

"Oh ! nothing more than that—that old sinner in the square yonder has'nt left off his tricks yet."

"Explain yourself," said Osmond, evidently agitated.

"That I will," replied Mactalla. He accordingly related to Osmond all that had lately occurred.

Unspeakable was the amazement and indignation of Osmond, at the particulars he communicated to him. The silence which he had hitherto maintained, with regard


to Lord O'Sinister's conduct towards him, he could no longer think of preserving; it seemed to him that his safety demanded his being explicit on the subject. He accordingly resolved on acquainting the Duke D'Amalfi with the whole of it, and requesting his interference with his lordship.

His excellency had just set off for a villa some miles distant from Naples, with a large party of friends, and thither Osmond determined to follow him immediately, as indeed he had been invited to do. A chaise was accordingly sent for, and in the course of an hour after his return from the field of battle, both Mr. Mactalla and his master were on their way to the residence of his excellency. This villa, like the one at which they had received succour for the wounded stranger, was rich in natural and artificial beauties; the house itself, built with an airy lightness suitable to the climate, was a model of elegant architecture. A double flight of marble steps, adorned on either side with antique statues, led to its vestibule, supported by

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several beautiful Corinthian pillars, and opening into a spacious saloon enlightened by a dome of richly-stained glass, and decorated with all that painting and sculpture could do for its embellishment. When the doors leading from this to the sitting-rooms, and again the outer ones that opened from these apartments into different parts of the grounds, were thrown open, a scene of grandeur, beauty, and variety, was presented to the view, that defied description.

A classic taste was everywhere apparent in the disposition of the grounds : a pleasing solemnity prevailed in front of the edifice ; the lawn on which it stood was shadowed with noble cedars ; and over a winding stream adjoining this, and half shrouded from view by clustering thickets, a rude bridge was thrown, bespread with moss and ivy ; and ending in the arched entrance of a time-struck temple, the ruins of which, scattered amidst the deep masses of shade that covered the steep banks at this side, gave a picturesque effect to the whole. At the rear of the house,



spacious walks extended, margined with parterres of the choicest flowers, and divided by groves of orange trees, and thickets of myrtle and roses ; from hence was caught a distant view of the glittering spires of Naples, backed by ranges of mountains gradually fading into air, and o'ertopped by Mount Vesuvius, casting up fire and smoke, and veiling at intervals the bright azure of the cloudless skies, while through the luxuriant foliage of the elevated woods, the eye looked down upon the blue waters of the bay, enlivened by the light sails of innumerable vessels, and on its matchless shores.

At this delightful retreat, at which Osmond arrived just as its beauties were beginning to be veiled by the shades of twilight; he found a large party assembled, and busy in preparing for a masquerade, that was to be given that night. As soon as he had paid his compliments to the duke, who professed himself very agreeably surprised by his having so speedily followed him from Naples, Osmond not having said

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anything when they parted, calculated to make his excellency imagine such was his intention, he retired to change his dress, and equip himself for the approaching entertainment, which he did by merely assuming a mask and domino ; but neither the novelty of the scene, (it being the first time he had ever been at an entertainment of the kind,) the magnificence that every where met his view, the harmonious strains that floated through the apartments, nor the gaiety of the crowd that filled them, could divert the uneasiness that preyed upon him, or for an instant dissipate the corroding reflections the unaccountable conduct of Lord O'Sinister had excited. At length, fatigued with a scene, in the pleasures of which he could not participate, he withdrew to the garden, which was partially illuminated. The lighted alleys, which were nearly as crowded as the room, he soon forsook for a distant walk bordered with beautiful groves, and where no other light prevailed than the shadowy light shed by the moon, now

slowly rising above the wooded hills, nor any sound save the soft sighing of the zephyrs, and the murmuring of waters.

To the imposing tranquillity of this scene, the irritation of Osmond's feelings gradually yielded. In a not unpleasant reverie, he wandered on till he came to the termination of the walk, which gradually expanded, and ended in a large grass plat, of oval form, in the centre of which was a light circular temple of white marble, at each side of which played a beautiful fountain. Osmond seated himself in the temple, and gazed around him with the liveliest admiration. The grass plat was margined with the most delicious shrubs, and round the spacious walk that encompassed it the groves completely swept, and uniting in the rear, formed deep shades, now partially silvered by the moon ; but what particularly attracted his regard was, the beauty of the statues that decorated the fountains. After sitting some time to enjoy the profound stillness that reigned in this part of the garden, and the delightful freshness of the air, rendered



cool by the ascending waters, he arose for the purpose of examining them. As he walked round one of the fountains, he suddenly became motionless with admiration at the sight of a figure seated on the edge of the white marble bason, the head averted, and representing a female in an attitude of the most profound melancholy. The softness of the drapery, the exquisite manner in which the symmetry of the form was revealed through it, and the striking pensiveness of the attitude, filled Osmond with no less wonder than admiration. While gazing, as if spell-bound, on this matchless specimen of art he fancied he heard a deep sigh; he listened attentively, but the sound not being repeated, concluded his ear had deceived him. At last his eye wandered in a different direction: quickly, however, it reverted to the object that had so fascinated it—He started, as it did, for the attitude appeared changed—"But no, no," he cried, after gazing for an instant with a kind of fearful wonder on the figure—"no, it cannot be—my senses, bewil-

dered by the various objects that have lately met my view, deceive me—yet no,” he exclaimed, “for the head now evidently moves.”

He made an effort to seize the figure, as he saw it rising from the fountain; but with a piercing shriek it eluded his grasp, and flew towards the walk up which he had come—He impulsively pursued. The agitation into which the incident had thrown him, made him feel his mask suffocating; he tore it off and flung it away. In a few minutes he came up with the flying fugitive—he gently seized her robe, and besought her not to be alarmed.

“Oh, Heavens!” she instantly exclaimed, in an under-tone, and the next moment dropped, apparently fainting, in his arms.

“Good God, of what has my temerity been the cause!” cried Osmond.

He looked wildly round him for assistance, but perceived no one at hand to administer any; and after a little hesitation, resolved on bearing his fair burthen

to the temple which he had just occupied. On depositing her there, he took off her mask, in order to let her have the full benefit of the air, and eagerly casting his eyes on her features, beheld those of his beloved and lovely Cordelia.

The rapture of this moment seemed to compensate him for all the pain he had suffered on her account. He pressed her to his bosom—he pronounced her name in the softest, gentlest accent—he kissed unconsciously, perhaps, as well as involuntarily, her cheek, pale and cold at the instant as the marble of which, but a few minutes before, he had imagined her composed. At length she began to shew signs of returning animation—"Where am I?" she exclaimed, in a tremulous tone, as, her eyes opening, she looked wildly about her.

"Safe, safe, my beloved—my Cordelia!" cried the enraptured Osmond, with irrepressible emotion.

"Ah! now I recollect all," she replied, lifting her eyes to his face as she raised

her head from his shoulder—"Good Heaven, how little did I imagine I should have met you here!"

"And as little," replied Osmond, "did I imagine such happiness was in store for me. Oh! my——may I," he added, in a somewhat more timid accent, "may I again venture to say, my Cordelia, what have I not suffered since we parted! but of this," and he gently took her hand, "you must be a judge, when I tell you I despaired of ever meeting you again."

"Per—perhaps," in a low and hesitating accent, returned Miss Raymond, making an effort, but a vain one, to withdraw her hand from his, "it would have been better for both if we never had."

Osmond started—the chillness of death seemed to fasten on his heart—"Better!" he repeated with difficulty—"better that we had never met again! Oh, Miss Raymond!—But I will not reproach you—the inequality of our fortunes forbids such a thought."

"As would justice—as would humanity! did you know the motive which ac-

tuated me to say so.—Yes, I repeat, since destined to part for ever, it would have been better if we had never met again.”

“To part for ever !” repeated Osmond, clasping his hands.

Miss Raymond for an instant raised her’s towards Heaven, with a despairing look, and then pressed them on her bosom.

“That this should be the case,” she cried, “that a lasting separation between us is inevitable, you will not wonder, when I tell you that I am——”

“Oh, speak !” cried Osmond — “In pity, in compassion,” and he dropped kneeling at her feet on finding her pause, “declare why we must part—ignorance on such a subject is not endurable.”

“That I am,” resumed Miss Raymond, after pausing a few minutes, during which her face was covered with her handkerchief, “the——But see,” she added, with a faint scream, starting up and stretching her arms over the shoulders of Osmond, as he still continued kneeling before her—“see my mother !”

Osmond at these words hastily arose, and

half turning, beheld a lady ascending the steps, in whose features on advancing, he recognized those of Mrs. Raymond. She suddenly stopped, and after surveying him and her daughter alternately for a minute, with the most scrutinizing earnestness, exclaimed, in an accent expressive of astonishment as well as agitation—"Good Heaven! Mr. Munro here!"

Miss Raymond, in trembling accents, accounted to her for being in the temple, attributing her having quitted the house to her having been overcome by the heat and noise.

"Have you explained to Mr. Munro," demanded Mrs. Raymond, with evident emotion, "the——"

Miss Raymond's eyes fell beneath the inquiring glance of her mother—"I intended to have done so," she said; "but——"

"Retire then, my love," returned her mother, "and I will take the painful task upon myself."

Miss Raymond bowed in sign of acquiescence, and advanced to the steps. Osmond involuntarily started forward to

hand her down them—"Are all my dreams of happiness then come to this?" he cried, in a tone of bitterness, as he presented his hand, or rather gently took her's—"After being allowed to entertain such hopes—to indulge in such expectations, must I for ever be compelled to give you up?"

Miss Raymond sighed—she hesitated—she paused on the last step.

"If to know the pain is mutual, which the disappointment of the expectations you allude to occasions, can afford you any consolation, receive that consolation now," she said, in a low and trembling voice—"receive it with my best wishes for your returning happiness—May——"

"Mr. Munro," said Mrs. Raymond, coming forward, and with an impatience in her looks, which proved her anxious to prevent any further conversation between him and her daughter, "I request your immediate attention."

Osmond started—sighed—pressed, for an instant, the trembling hand of the lovely Cordelia to his sinking heart, and then reluctantly, most reluctantly, resign-

ing it, reascended the steps to Mrs. Raymond.—A silence of a few minutes ensued—Mrs. Raymond then began.

“Most painful, as I have just said, is the task I have taken upon myself; equal to the happiness I should have derived from realizing the hopes I gave birth to in your bosom, is the anguish I feel at being compelled to destroy them.”

“Compelled!” repeated Osmond, involuntarily, and with reproachful bitterness—“Ah, madam! acknowledge that when you inspired them, you were not so sensible of your daughter’s value as you are now.”

“Your surmise is most unjust,” returned Mrs. Raymond with quickness.—“I solemnly protest, in the sight of Heaven, that the change in my intentions respecting you, is occasioned neither by pecuniary nor ambitious motives, but entirely by your having——”

“What?” exclaimed Osmond, grasping her hand, scarcely conscious of what he was about, his very soul appearing to



hover on his lips—"Oh, madam, in mercy prolong not the tortures of suspense."

"Raised your hand against the life of her father! said Mrs. Raymond, finishing the sentence which agitation had interrupted.

"Raised my hand against the life of her father!—the life of Mr. Raymond!" repeated Osmond, aghast, and dropping the hand which he had seized—"Great God! who has accused me of such a crime? Tell me, tell me, madam," in vehement accents he continued, the paleness of horror giving way to the glow of rage and indignation, "who the vile calumniator is, that I may force him to confess he has given utterance to a falsehood."

"Ah! would to Heaven you could convince me that the accusation was a falsehood—would to Heaven you could convince me that your hand was never raised against Lord O'Sinister."

"Lord O'Sinister!" repeated Osmond, staring wildly at her—"Lord O'Sinister!" he again uttered, with almost breathless

emotion—"But—but," and he trembled through a prophetic fear, "Lord O'Sinister and Mr. Raymond are not one."

"Alas! too truly."

Again horror-struck, Osmond recoiled a few paces—"Gracious Heaven!" he inwardly exclaimed, as he leaned his trembling frame against a pillar, "what a discovery! His lordship's motives for wishing to force me from Naples are now explained. But for imposing upon me in the manner he has done—for shrouding himself from my knowledge under a fictitious name, what can have been the cause? Oh, how much more successfully would he have checked my growing partiality for his daughter, by at once discovering himself to me, than by the measures he adopted for the purpose; had he at once revealed to me who the fair object of my admiration was, honour and gratitude would have united to oppose my rising passion."

That Mrs. Raymond, or as she should henceforth be called, Lady O'Sinister, had received an erroneous statement of all that

had passed between him and his lordship, her words implied. As Osmond reflected on this, a faint hope sprung in his mind, that perhaps, if undeceived on the subject, she might again be induced to give countenance to his wishes respecting her daughter—those wishes which she had so contributed to strengthen; at all events he deemed it due to his character, to endeavour to clear it from the aspersions which, he made no doubt, had been thrown upon it. He accordingly, having endeavoured to collect his thoughts, so as to be enabled to speak with some degree of composure, again approached her; scarcely, however, had he commenced his intended vindication, ere she interrupted him.

“ ’Tis unnecessary for you, believe me,” she cried, “ to enter into any vindication of your conduct; my esteem, my regard for you remain undiminished.—You look astonished at this assertion, wondering, no doubt, at my intentions concerning you being changed, since my opinion of you continues the same; but to account for their being so, know that the public inge-

neral are so fully persuaded of your having attempted the life of her father, that for me to sanction your union with my daughter, would be to draw upon myself a lasting opprobrium."

"And who, who," demanded Osmond, indignantly, "is the person who has impressed such a belief on the public mind?"

"A person," returned her ladyship, emphatically, "whose rank, fortune, and specious manners, give weight to whatever he asserts. Inquire no further, but allow me to employ the few minutes we can remain together, in explaining to you the situation in which I stand with my lord, and the motives which actuated me to think of acting contrary to his inclination in the disposal of his daughter."

Osmond bowed, to evince his being all attention, and her ladyship thus proceeded.

"Lord O'Sinister and I have long been on such terms, as would, some years back, have induced me to consent to, or rather propose a separation, but that I was aware I could not separate myself from him

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without separating myself also from my daughter ; rather, therefore, than forego her society, abandon the sacred duties of a mother, and expose her to the pernicious influence of flattery and corrupt society, I determined on continuing at what I could not avoid considering my proper post. Innumerable were the mortifications which this determination drew upon me : but for all I have been more than compensated—First, by the consciousness of having done my duty, and secondly, by the affection, tenderness, and virtues of my Cordelia—virtues of which, from the first dawn of reason, she gave the fairest promise. Convinced by sad experience, that the most splendid is not always the happiest station, I have always been more solicitous for my daughter's union with a man of principle than fortune. With your connexions, your character, your pursuits and principles, I have long been intimately acquainted—what I thought of these, my sanctioning the partiality between you and her must better testify than words. I quickly perceived, and re-

solved on encouraging it, having in my own hands the power of launching you into life, in a manner suitable to her birth ; and feeling convinced that she could not make a choice more calculated to insure her happiness, I looked forward to the period of your union with impatience, as to a period in which she would be snatched from the caprices of a tyrannical father, and I restored to domestic felicity—to all those social delights to which I had long been a stranger in the house of my husband ; in short, I indulged in a thousand exquisite anticipations, which are now all, alas ! like the airy fabric of a vision, dissolved, without leaving a wreck behind.”

“ Oh, Madam,” in a voice scarce audible,” cried Osmond, “ in pity spare me !—Dwell not, dwell not, I conjure you, on the felicity that has been thus torn from my grasp.”

“ Pardon me,” said Lady O’Sinister, in a voice almost as broken as his own, and laying a trembling hand upon his

am—"To be brief—my Lord conceived a suspicion of my designs respecting you—this suspicion was sufficient to induce him to contrive a pretext for removing me and Miss Athelstone immediately from the hotel. We left it under the idea of returning to it in the course of an hour; but instead of allowing this he took us to a house which had, previously to his coming to Naples, been engaged for him, where he had recourse to precautions that rendered it utterly impossible to have any communication with you. The restriction on his daughter's liberty and mine, continued till after your unfortunate rencontre with him,"

"Oh, Madam," exclaimed Osmond, "I cannot avoid thinking that affair has either been grossly misrepresented or cruelly exaggerated to you. The most insulting artifices——"

"I am perfectly aware of all," interrupted Lady O'Sinister, "of the cruel machinations that were practised against you; but my believing you innocent is

not, as I have already said, sufficient, except the world coincides in that opinion. Were I, in consequence of acquitting you in my own mind, to bestow my daughter on you, I am convinced I should forfeit the esteem which I have hitherto retained, though not without many painful sacrifices, my lord, in order to try and lighten the enormity of his own conduct, having made it a point to vilify mine—a proceeding which compelled me to be rigidly circumspect in all my actions. Hitherto, in consequence of this circumspection, his slanders have gained no credit—But the world is prone to ill-nature; 'tis ever eager to rob you of the applause it bestows. Besides, it judges from appearances, and I therefore make no doubt that if in the slightest instance I deviated from propriety, much more, gave my daughter to to the man who is generally believed to have raised his hand against the life of her father, I should unhesitatingly be accused of having played the part of a hypocrite to this period, and remain ever after an object of calumny. That the censure which



we are conscious of not deserving, we should disregard, you may perhaps say ; but when you reflect on the humiliations to which the female who slights the public opinion is exposed, I am persuaded you'll concur with me in thinking that she cannot be too tenacious of it."

### CHAP. III.

“————— He at the news  
Heart struck, with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,  
That all his senses bound.”

MILTON.

A DEEP sigh was Osmond's response to this observation of Lady O'Sinister. After a short pause—"To what is inevitable," resumed her ladyship, "your good sense will, I trust, soon reconcile you—You must endeavour to forget——"

"Ah! madam," hastily interrupted Osmond, and again with something of reproachful bitterness in his voice, "recollect what the poet says—

"Of all afflictions taught a lover yet,  
'Tis sure the hardest science to forget."

"But to indulge recollections that can

only agonize, is weakness," returned her ladyship—"Remember, that of those to whom much has been given, much will be expected—from superior sense and a cultivated mind, more than common exertions will be looked for. Come," added she, tenderly pressing his arm, and looking anxiously in his face, "let me not part from you under the saddening idea of your yielding to this disappointment—promise me to exert yourself."

"Time, madam," said Osmond, respectfully pressing the hand she rested on his arm, and half averting his eyes to avoid her's, "time may enable me to overcome the pain it inflicts; but 'tis only time that can——"

"Oh, would to God," cried Lady O'Sinister with evidently irrepressible emotion, and clasping his hands between her's—"would to God my lord could be prevailed on to render you that justice he owes you—could be induced to make you the only adequate atonement in his power, for the injuries he has done you, by bestowing his daughter on you."

Osmond sighed, and shook his head despondently, for as well, he was convinced, might he

“ ————— Go stand upon the beach,  
And bid the main-flood bate his usual height—  
As well use question with the wolf,  
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb?  
As well forbid the mountain pines  
To wag their high tops, and to make a noise  
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven—  
As well do any thing most hard,”

as hope to induce his lordship to act in this manner.

“ His lordship’s persecuting enmity towards me,” he replied, “ forbids my indulging any expectation of the kind—Oh ! madam, for this enmity—for his wishing too to conceal himself from my knowledge, can you assign any reason ?”

“ To say I could not, would be to utter a falsehood,” returned her ladyship ; “ but motives of the most delicate nature enjoin me silence on the subject. Time may unveil much to your knowledge ; but let the discoveries you may yet make be what they may, I trust they will never banish

from your recollection whose father—whose husband Lord O'Sinister is.

“ Good God ! ” exclaimed Osmond, in the most violent agitation, “ what mystery is couched beneath these words ?—Explain, explain, madam, I conjure you, the import of them ! You have put me on the rack by what you have said—Tell me, has Lord O'Sinister done me any greater wrong than I am aware of ? ”

Lady O'Sinister appeared alarmed and confused by this question—“ I repeat,” returned she, “ what I have have just said, that relative to every part of his conduct not already known to you, my lips are sealed. I have wounded and outraged my feelings, by the explicit manner in which I have already spoken of him to you ; nothing but absolute necessity could have induced me to violate the laws of delicacy and decorum, by mentioning him in such terms. To prevent, however, any unnecessary uneasiness, permit me to assure you, that whatever were the nameless wrongs he medi-

tated, they have been rendered abortive, by that good Providence which still watches over the children of the virtuous man."

"Ha!" exclaimed Osmond, recoiling a few paces at these words, his eyes kindling, his cheeks flushing to crimson, his breathing short, and interrupted by emotion—"The children, said you?—I now begin to develop the mystery—my sister!"—He paused—paused to reflect on the various circumstances, which, as they gradually occurred to his recollection, confirmed his conjecture of his sister's destruction having been attempted by Lord O'Sinister. The sudden manner in which he had made an offer of his patronage to his father—his immediately sending him away from his family—the equally sudden way in which Elizabeth, after eulogizing his lordship, had ceased speaking of him—the broken hints, the hatred, the contempt in which Delacour held him—the vile character which his lady gave him, all as reviewed by Osmond, convinced him that he was not mistaken in this supposition—"Yes, yes, the

veil is now completely rent away," he cried, "and he stands confessed a monster of depravity—yes, I now perceive that the generosity which called forth such warm, such heartfelt acknowledgments, was assumed for the purpose of betraying innocence—that he only affected benevolence, to obtain an opportunity of inflicting wounds, which human pity could not have healed: but he shall not go unpunished. It was not his fault that my sister escaped his snares, and by Heaven he shall experience the punishment he merits, for ever having sought to involve her in them. His real character shall no longer remain unknown; to the infamy, the scorn he merits, he shall immediately be exposed; and oh, may every pang he has given to the bosoms of those I love be doubled in his own; in the horrors of remorse may his nights be spent—his days in vain efforts to elude them; may——"

"Go on," interrupted Lady O'Sinister, in a tone of the most reproachful bitterness; call down still deeper maledictions on his head; to complete his punish-

ment, pray that he may go childless to his grave."

Osmond started, and instantly recollected himself.—"Ah, madam," he exclaimed "surely the severity of that speech was not merited—surely some little allowance should be made for feelings like mine!—yet I acknowledge—candidly acknowledge myself in error for having suffered them to transport me so far in your presence."

"Be assured I neither wonder at, nor resent their having done so," replied her ladyship; "but though I acknowledge this, I cannot forbear conjuring you to moderate their violence.—My lord has not escaped punishment, believe me, and that too of a severe nature, for the injury he meditated against your sister, and I so unfortunately, by means of an unguarded expression, have betrayed to you; let the knowledge of this, therefore, appease your resentment. To pursue its dictates would be to betray to your father what he at present is happily ignorant of, and thus, in all probability, draw greater evils



upon your family, than any they have yet experienced. Let me conjure you, therefore, to think no more of what you have so unexpectedly discovered."

"I will not promise what is impossible," answered Osmond, after a silence of some minutes, during which he appeared buried in reflection. "My senses must be completely steeped in forgetfulness, ere I can cease to think of what I have heard; but I will promise to leave it to the hand of Heaven, to avenge the wrongs of the injured."

"Enough," said Lady O'Sinister, "that promise completely satisfies me: and now, my dear—dear young friend, we must part; a long interval may elapse ere we meet again; but trust me, neither time nor distance will lessen the regard I entertain for you—nothing but your dereliction from the virtues which made me adopt the idea of giving you the treasure of my life can diminish it. To hear of your happiness, to be instrumental to it, will add to mine.—Of the liberal patron you have found in the Duke D'Amalfi, I am not

ignorant; but should you in process of time find a continuance in this country unpleasant—should you, in short, require another friend, I trust, instead of seeking a new one, you will apply to your old one.”

“Oh, Madam,” cried the greatly agitated Osmond, almost convulsively grasping the hand which, as she uttered the last words, she extended to him, “this is a cruel kindness—since doomed to lose the pleasure resulting from your society, aggravate not the pangs of that doom, by giving me still greater reason to regard you.”

“Adieu, then,” returned her ladyship, and for an instant she pressed with fervour his hand between hers; “may Heaven bless and for ever prosper you; never, never shall I cease considering you as my son—never, never,” she repeated, but in an under and broken voice, “shall I cease lamenting your not being so in reality.” Then again bidding him adieu, she broke from him, and precipitately retired.

Osmond, with despairing eyes, pursued

her receding steps; when she was no longer visible, he threw himself, in an agony too great for description, upon the spot where they had parted.—“Thus, thus, then,” he wildly exclaimed, “end all my fond, my flattering hopes! Oh, why—why was I permitted to indulge in such, since destined to have them disappointed!”

He now raved with all the violence of resentment against the cruel and unprincipled author of his unhappiness; then again softened into tenderness at the recollection of Lady O'Sinister's kindness. Her conduct now appeared to him in a more noble light than it had ever done before; since, from the explanation that had just taken place, he was convinced she had been actuated to give him her daughter—the treasure of her life, as she emphatically styled her, chiefly by a wish to make atonement to him for the injuries his family had experienced from her lord. When he thought of those injuries—when he thought of Lord O'Sinister's having meditated the destruction of his sister,

he spurned at himself for regretting the idea of not being allied to him, but the feelings which occasioned this indignation against himself, were but transient; love, almighty love, quickly resumed his empire over him, and every nerve throbbed with anguish at the thoughts of being for ever separated from Cordelia. In the bitterness of disappointment he was at first tempted to accuse Lady O'Sinister of sacrificing too much to the public opinion; but a little reflection convinced him a woman of delicacy could not have acted on the present occasion in any other manner than she did.

From the temple he repaired to the spot where he had so unexpectedly beheld the lovely girl. He threw himself on the sod which her feet had so recently pressed; he bent over the waters which had reflected her image, and with which he had every reason to believe her tears had mingled.—Yes, her sighs, her attitude, her withdrawing from the gay and brilliant assembly in the house, all convinced him that sorrow was seated at her heart; as did

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equally her exclamation, her fainting, at discovering him, that he was the cause of that sorrow.

He continued wandering about the gardens till the dawn of morning, when perceiving he could no longer escape observation in them, he retreated to the house, and desired to be shewn to a chamber.— This being done, Mactalla, but without being called for, was sent to him. Absorbed in the most saddening reflections, Osmond for some time heeded not the strange grimaces, and broken exclamations of his valet. At length he was roused to something like attention, by Mactalla's saying as he took his coat from him—"How unfortunate, how unfortunate!" and turning hastily to him demanded what?

"Oh, nothing," replied Mactalla, as he folded up his coat, and laid it upon a chair, "but that you should fall in love with the daughter of the devil."

"How!" exclaimed Osmond, starting, and surveying him with a kind of wild earnestness.

"Aye, its too true," returned Mactalla.  
"I have found it all out."

"Found what out?" asked Osmond, with the utmost impatience; "don't let me be tortured now with one of your round-about stories."

"Oh faith, I wish the story I have to tell you was as sweet as it is short.—As I was amusing myself on the lawn with looking at the company coming and going, and dancing about in groups, like fairies by moonlight, who should I see but your beautiful mistress, and her handsome mother, coming towards a carriage, with that old fox, Mr. Raymond, as I thought him—Oh ho, says I to myself, on seeing them, here will be good news for my master; so I turned to a servant of the duke's, who was with me, and asked him where that gentleman, nodding at Mr. Raymond, lived?—What, Lord O'Sinister? said he—Lord O'Sinister, repeated I; pho, pho, no, not Lord O'Sinister, but that gentleman,—and I again looked at the supposed Mr. Raymond. Why, man, I tell you, said

he, that the gentleman you are looking at is Lord O'Sinister, an English nobleman, who has a villa adjoining my lord's, with whom he has lately become very intimate."

"Intimate!" echoed Osmond, involuntarily, and with a presageful idea, that if this were true, he should not much longer enjoy the friendship of his excellency.

"Yes," replied Mactalla, "I inquired into all the particulars, and so found that it was true enough."

"I hope," said Osmond, "you made no observation relative to his lordship."

"Me!" returned Mactalla, somewhat confused, "no, not a word did I say about him."

"Not one word!" asked Osmond, in an incredulous tone.

"No, by the Powers, not one, but that he was an old rogue, and that it was a thousand pities he didn't break his neck clambering over the Appennines."

"Ah, I thought something of the kind,"

cried Osmond, shaking his head ; “ in future I must request, nay insist, on your silence with regard to him.”

He then having extorted a promise to this effect from Mactalla, dismissed him, and threw himself half undressed upon the couch, which he quitted in the course of a few hours, without having once closed his eyes, and with both an aching head and heart, and also a resolution not to touch on the subject which he had left Naples for the purpose of consulting with the duke on, since he had discovered Lord O'Sinister to be the father of his Cordelia.

While dressing, Mactalla made his appearance, and brought him a message from his excellency, requesting his company to breakfast, *tête-à-tête* with him in his library.

Osmond hastened thither, and was received by his noble patron with his usual condescension ; the attendants were dismissed, and they sat down to breakfast alone.

After a little desultory conversation,



principally relative to the entertainment of the preceding night, the duke suddenly turning a scrutinizing glance upon Osmond, said—"You don't look well, my young friend, this morning; I'm much inclined to imagine this climate does not agree with you."

Osmond sighed heavily.—"Would that I had not more reason to complain of other matters," cried he, involuntarily, "than I have of it."

"Indeed! and pray may I, without the charge of impertinence, inquire what it is you have to complain of?"

Osmond recollected himself, and blushed deeply at his inadvertence.—"Nothing worth your excellency's listening to," returned he.

A silence of some minutes followed these words, during which the duke appeared both thoughtful and embarrassed. At length, again turning his eyes on Osmond—"My young friend," said he, with a forced smile, "I am afraid you will think strangely of me, when I tell you that I should not have been sorry to have

heard you acknowledge I was not mistaken."

Osmond started and stared, as well indeed he might, with astonishment.

"The truth is," proceeded his excellency, after another pause, "my having taken a foreigner under my protection, and given him a situation which many natives of the kingdom solicited in vain, has caused such general discontent, that I—I" hesitating greatly and rather shunning the penetrating eyes of Osmond, "find myself in a most awkward predicament, insomuch that I should not have been sorry to have found you disinclined to continue here."

"Then be satisfied, my lord," said Osmond, rising involuntarily from the table, his face suffused with the glow of indignation, "for I am disinclined to continue here—to continue where treachery pursues me wherever I go."

"Treachery!" repeated the duke, also quitting the table; "pray explain yourself; for I—I really am at a—a loss," but

again hesitating, so as to convince Osmond he was insincere in the assertion, "to comprehend your meaning."

"Excuse me, my lord," said Osmond, again recollecting himself, and in a respectful but decided tone; "neither explanation nor recrimination would, I am confident, be availing here; nor shall I longer obtrude upon your excellency's time, than to entreat that from this instant you would consider yourself extricated from the unpleasant predicament in which you stand on my account, as the situation you were so graciously pleased to bestow on me is again at your excellency's disposal."

"Nay," cried the duke, evidently hurt, "you wrong me, if you suppose, by what I said, that I meant you should resign it immediately."

"If your excellency thought I would not," replied Osmond, warmly, "you must have had a very ignoble opinion of me."

"Well," said the duke, "I must insist

on your accepting such an equivalent for it as shall enable you to settle yourself with comfort in your own country."

"Pardon me, my lord," returned Osmond, haughtily and firmly, "I will neither wound my own feelings, nor suffer your excellency to run the risk of having your's wounded, by again receiving any additional obligation from you; all I require from your excellency is common justice—that you will allow it to be generally understood, that your gift to me was not revoked on account of any unworthiness on my part."

"Depend upon it," returned the duke, equivocally, "I will not say any thing to injure you; your conduct to the Acerenza family, were I even inclined to do so, would prevent me."

"My conduct whilst I enjoyed the patronage of your excellency, would equally do so, I should hope," returned Osmond, with increasing warmth.

The duke's brows contracted, his sallow cheek became flushed; he drew back a few paces, and measured Osmond with a

scornful eye.—“ Young man,” he then haughtily said, “ recollect yourself.”

Osmond turned in indignant silence from him, and paced the room for a few minutes, ere he would trust himself to speak again ; then pausing—“ I see, I see,” cried he, in a tone of mingled dejection and bitterness, “ in this business the cloven foot that has so long pursued me. That your excellency has a noble heart, I believe,” added he ; “ provoke not, therefore, that remorse, which the noble heart never fails of experiencing for injuring the innocent, by suffering yourself to be prevailed on to vilify my character.”

“ Come, come, sir,” hastily said his excellency, “ be rational, and instead of admonishing, suffer yourself to be admonished ; I ask no explanation of your ambiguous sayings, but merely advise you, instead of any longer wasting your time in idle pursuits in Naples, to return without delay to your native country, in which I again offer to provide you with the means of settling yourself.”

“ Worlds should not tempt me to ac-

cept that offer ; but though I decline, I entreat your excellency to believe I am truly grateful for it."

" Well, sir, I am sorry to find your pride so excessive ; should it lower, you will find me still ready to perform what I have offered."

" That I should ever again trouble your excellency, seems most unlikely, as it is my intention to follow your advice, by immediately setting off for England."

" I rejoice to hear so," returned the duke, in an accent that permitted Osmond to have no doubt of his not having now spoken with sincerity. " Come, disdain not good counsel ; be a friend to yourself, by suffering me to prove one to you."

" I have already taken the liberty of mentioning how your excellency can do so," replied Osmond ; " let not my character be aspersed, when I am no longer at hand to vindicate it, and you will indeed give yourself a claim to the title of one."

He then begged permission to take an

immediate leave of his excellency, which, after a little hesitation, was granted him.

The chaise which had brought him from Naples was still in waiting at the villa ; and in a few minutes after he had bid adieu to the duke, he was on his way back, for the purpose of making immediate preparations for his departure for England.

During his short journey various were the changes his mind underwent, and violent the struggles he experienced.—That it was some vile allegation of Lord O'Sinister's, which had occasioned the duke to withdraw his patronage from him; he had not the smallest doubt, as but the preceding morning his excellency had expressed a hope of his having relinquished all thoughts of returning to England ; and in the height of the resentment and indignation which this cruel treachery, this unprovoked enmity of his lordship's inspired him with, he was almost tempted to hasten back, and in the presence of the duke confront him with his villainy. Nothing but consideration for the feelings of Lady O'Si-

nister, and her lovely and beloved daughter, withheld him from this measure, although almost convinced anything he advanced in opposition to the statement of his lordship would be unavailing, since not supported by the testimony of any one who could have weight with his excellency.

On his arrival at the hotel, he was informed by a waiter that an old gentleman had come to lodge there that day, who had very particularly inquired for him, and requested to see him the instant he returned. That this was the stranger whose life he had been instrumental in saving, Osmond had no doubt, and sincerely did he rejoice at his recovery; but, notwithstanding, felt so unwilling, from the state of mind he was then in, to visit him, that he was on the point of desiring his return might be concealed, when benevolence suddenly interposed, and induced him to repair to his apartment.

He found he was not mistaken in his conjecture, and was received with the most flattering demonstrations of gratitude.

“ My son—my friend—my preserver ! ”



cried the old gentleman, or, as we shall in future style him, signor Barbarino, such being the name he gave himself, eagerly extending his hands as he spoke to Osmond, "words cannot do justice to the gratitude your conduct, your unremitting inquiries, and the generous motive which actuated you to leave your address for me, has inspired; but thank God, for the sake of others I thank him, poverty is not amongst the evils I groan under. Could riches alone confer happiness, I were then supremely blessed; but, praised be Heaven, I have lived to find they cannot!—but for my conviction of their inability to do so, I might have died in enmity with those whom I am bound by the laws of nature to love and serve.—Oh, by so long keeping my heart closed against them, what days—what years of felicity have I not lost!"

"My dear sir," said Osmond, "but few, I believe, pass through life without some cause of reproach against themselves.—For the errors we commit we must hope we shall obtain forgiveness by repentance and atonement."

He then, anxious to give a turn to the conversation from the effect he saw it was likely to produce upon the debilitated frame of the invalid, mentioned the reason of his not having made personal inquiries after him.

“ I am sensible of your kind consideration for me in every instance,” returned signor Barbarino ; “ but,” and he looked anxiously as well as tenderly in the countenance of Osmond, “ I fear you have not had the same consideration for yourself.”

Osmond heaved a deep sigh, and bent his eyes to the ground.—“ Of bodily indisposition,” replied he, “ I have no cause to complain.”

“ But of mental ; I understand you ;” eagerly exclaimed the other ; “ tell me—tell me,” laying his hand, with trembling emotion on the arm of Osmond, “ is the affliction under which you labour one that friendship can relieve ?”

Osmond shook his head despondently. “ My dear sir,” cried he, pressing the feeble hand which rested on his arm, “ he

assured I am truly grateful for the solicitude you express about me ; but time alone can relieve the affliction you have noticed."

"That it may speedily do so, shall be one of my most fervent prayers," returned signor Barbarino.

Osmond testified his gratitude for this speech by a bow, and both in the course of a few minutes becoming a little more composed, he learnt that signor Barbarino was not a native of Italy, but had visited Naples solely for the purpose of recovering a large sum of money due to him by a merchant there, and that he was on the point of quitting it when in a solitary ramble with an old confidential servant, whose unhappy fate he deplored with tears, he met with the dismal adventure which introduced him to the knowledge of Osmond.

After a little further conversation Osmond arose to take his leave for the present. Signor Barbarino looked both surprised and disappointed.—"I fully expected," said he, "to have had the pleasure of

your company this day, and trust, as well as entreat, you will not disappoint me."

"I assure you, my dear sir," replied Osmond, "nothing should prevent my spending it with you, but my being under a necessity of making immediate arrangements for my departure from Naples."

"From Naples!—and pray may I inquire whither you are going?"

"To England."

"To England!—good Heaven, how fortunate!" exclaimed Signor Barbarino, in a tone of ecstasy.

"Fortunate!" repeated Osmond, involuntarily, and with a look of astonishment.

"Yes; for I am about departing for that kingdom myself; and came hither as much for the purpose of trying to prevail on you to accompany me thither, as for that of thanking you for your kindness and attention to me. Will you permit me to travel with you?"

"Most willingly, my dear sir."

"I am going thither," resumed the old

gentleman, "in quest of what I have long been a stranger to—happiness; 'tis there only I can recover it—there only I can make expiation for my manifold sins and offences!"

Osmond looked at him with increased astonishment, and nothing but politeness, and the consideration that he could not ask his confidence without granting him his own in return, which many reasons militated against his doing, prevented his giving utterance to the curiosity which his mysterious language excited.

"All my arrangements are already made," proceeded Signor Barbarino, "so that whenever you choose to depart, I am ready to attend you."

Osmond replied it was his intention to set out the ensuing day, if he, Signor Barbarino, had no objection.

"On the contrary," he answered, to the great satisfaction of Osmond, who was anxious in the extreme to quit Naples, lest a longer continuance in it should expose him to some new insult from Lord O'Sinister, that would compel him to

pass those bounds he had prescribed to himself with regard to his lordship, out of respect to the feelings of his lady and daughter.

Their plans finally adjusted, and his promise given that he would return to dine with Signor Barbarino, he withdrew from his apartment to his own, for the purpose of commencing preparations for his departure, and apprising Mactalla, while he had the power of making a choice, of the probability there was of his not being able to retain him in his service after his arrival in England.

"Well, that shan't prevent my going with you there," said Mactalla, as soon as he had a little recovered the surprise which the unexpected information of Osmond had occasioned him. "No, no, by the Powers, I wouldn't give up the chance of remaining in your service, for any offer that could be made me here."

"I can only say in return," said Osmond, "that I trust fortune will yet smile sufficiently to enable me to reward,

in the manner I wish, your faithful attachment."

"Tut, tut, signor, don't speak of rewarding a man for doing what is agreeable to himself. I like and love you, and that is the reason I stay with you."— Then, after a short pause, "to be sure there is one thing I should like to have done before I leave Italy."

"What may that be?" asked Osmond.

"Why, signor, to get a few lines written, to have placed at the head of my father's grave, for the purpose of letting people know who he was. There he lies in the church-yard of Acerenza, without any one knowing any thing of the matter; which, seeing he was a brave soldier, fought many severe battles, and received innumerable wounds, I think rather a hard case.

"You want an epitaph for him," said Osmond, smiling at the pride his valet betrayed in wishing to perpetuate the name of his father.

"The very thing," replied Mactalla,

joyfully ; “ if I could but get somebody to write one, there is a young man belonging to Acerenza now in Naples, who I know I could depend on for getting it engraved on the tomb-stone.”

“ Well, suppose I was to invoke a muse on this occasion ;” asked Osmond, “ what should I say of the virtues of your father ?”

“ The virtues,” repeated Mactalla, as if a little puzzled by the question, and rubbing his head, thoughtfully ; “ why I can’t pretend to say, signor, that he was very sober, nor yet very quiet ; the truth is, indeed, he was a devil of a drinker and fighter.”

“ Well, but doubtless he was steady in his attachments, constant to his wife, and——”

“ Ah, the less, signor,” interrupted Mactalla, shaking his head, “ we say on that subject, I believe, the better, at least, if the word of my mother was to be taken.”

“ Well,” returned Osmond, again smiling, “ bravery, like charity, covers a multitude of faults ; so your father shall



be handed down to posterity as a good man."

He accordingly sat down to a writing table, and in a few minutes wrote the promised epitaph, to the unspeakable delight of Mactalla.

Osmond had no farewell visits to pay in Naples: as soon, therefore, as the necessary arrangements for his departure were made, he repaired to his new friend, and passed the remainder of the day with him, and the next morning, as agreed upon, embarked with him, their baggage, and valets, on board a vessel in the Bay of Naples.

Their voyage we shall pass over in silence, nothing occurring in the course of it worth mentioning, and content ourselves with saying, they arrived in safety at Falmouth.

Osmond landed without knowing to what part of the kingdom Signor Barbarino was bound, nor did he learn till he was about setting off for Scotland, when the old gentleman acquainted him he was also going thither, and into his imme-

diate neighbourhood, and therefore begged he might be allowed to pursue the remainder of his journey with him.

In this request Osmond readily acquiesced ; he had gradually indeed conceived such a prepossession in favour of the old gentleman, who, though often desponding, and always mysterious, was nevertheless a pleasing companion, that he could not think of bidding him adieu without regret ; neither in the course of their journey could he altogether suppress the curiosity he felt to know to whom he was going in his neighbourhood ; his inquiry on this subject, however, was evaded in a manner which prevented his renewing it.

At a small town about three miles from Heathwood, Osmond took leave of him, but with a promise of seeing him again the ensuing day, till when he avowed an intention of remaining where they had alighted. Here also Osmond was induced, by his uncertainty concerning the present situation of his family, to leave Mactalla for the present—a circumstance which was

extremely agreeable to Signor Barbarino, as he had taken a very particular fancy to the merry valet of his young friend, inso-much that at all times he preferred his attendance to that of his own servant, probably owing to the gratification he afforded his curiosity relative to Osmond, about whom and his family he sought opportunities of asking questions.

A carriage not being immediately to be procured, Osmond proceeded to the habitation of his father on foot. As he drew near the beloved spot, endeared to his affections by being at once the residence of those most dear to his regard, and the scene of his purest felicity—the only felicity he had ever yet experienced without alloy, his heart swelled with a thousand delicious sensations—a thousand delightful anticipations ; and spite of all the vexation he had lately experienced, the disappointment of his fondest hopes, the wounds inflicted on his heart by treachery, he would have felt happy at the moment, but for the uncertainty above alluded to—the conjectural fears which a review of

Lord O'Sinister's conduct caused him to be agitated by.

It was now the latter end of February, but as yet the brownness of winter had in no place given way to the verdure of spring, and the dreariness of the faded landscape was increased by the wintry music of a cold and rustling wind, and the gloom of closing day, for it was late when Osmond set out for Heathwood. But when he caught a glimpse of his native home, fear and melancholy were alike dissipated. He bounded forward, but on a sudden stopped, horror-struck at beholding the house shut up, without the smallest indication of its being inhabited.

"Oh God!" he exclaimed, in agony, "what an ominous sight is this! Has death been busy here—have I returned only to mourn over the ashes of my parents!"

He hastened to the gate; he knocked and called aloud; but the mournful echo of his own voice was the only sound that met his ear, save the melancholy lowing of the cattle scattered o'er lea. He tried

but in vain, to discover a glimpse of light through the shutters, or a tint of smoke from the chimnies. At length, determined on ascertaining the fact, whether or not the house was entirely deserted, he climbed over the gate, and made his way through the shrubbery. As he feared, however, he found the rear shut up like the front, and was of consequence convinced that it was totally uninhabited, as also that it had been so for a long time; the dock spreading its broad leaves over the very threshold of the doors, and the court and winding avenues through the shrubbery, on the neatness of which he knew his father used to pride himself, being completely overgrown with weeds. That some dreadful event had occasioned the desertion of this beloved spot, he had not the smallest doubt; as for an instant he could not suppose, that had the family been only gone on a visit, or party of pleasure, they would not have left some person to take care of it.

Grief and disappointment for a few minutes completely subdued the unhappy

youth ; he returned to the front of the house, and leaning his face against the barricaded door, which but a few minutes before he had hoped the hand of his father would have opened to him, shed a torrent of bitter tears. Then repassing the gate, he bent his steps to the nearest cottage, for the purpose of inquiring into the fate of his family, which he doubted not being known to all the neighbourhood.

This cottage happened to be Farmer Watkins's, whom Osmond well remembered having often, when a boy, amused himself, in concert with other lads of his age, at his expence, his precise manners, and affectation of sanctity, rendering him the butt of the village.

The casements were not yet closed, and through them Osmond espied the farmer seated by himself before a blazing fire, which sent forth a cheerful light, that caused his mansion to form a striking contrast to the lonely and dreary one he had just quitted.

Osmond tapped at the door, and was

desired to come in. He accordingly raised the latch and entered. The farmer, supposing it to be one of his rustic neighbours, who had called on him, turned indolently on his chair ; but at the sight of a very elegant young man, instinctively started from it. Osmond as instinctively took off his hat, and approached him with an extended hand ; for though he had never liked Watkins, yet in the present state of his feelings, his being an old acquaintance was sufficient to make him experience a sensation of joy at beholding him.

“ I perceive,” cried he, with a forced smile, seeing Watkins surveying him with a vacant stare, “ that you do not recollect me.”

“ I profess,” answered Watkins, “ if thou knowest me, thou hast the advantage of me, for I remember thee not.”

“ What, not the son of your neighbour, Osmond Munro ?”

“ Osmond Munro !” repeated Watkins ; “ verily I never should have recognised thee, if thou hadst not proclaimed thyself,

for thou art increased much in stature since I last saw thee ; thou left this a boy, and hast returned a man."

" Which, considering I have been some years absent, is not to be wondered at ; but doubtless, my friend, you can give me some information respecting my family.—'Tis unnecessary, I am sure to tell you how greatly I have been shocked and alarmed at finding their house shut up."

" Then thou hast not lately heard from them ?"

" No, for some time past I have led rather an unsettled life."

" True, I recollect since thou quittedst this, thou hast been a great traveller ; been to foreign parts, and seen many rare sights."

" Many—but, my friend, I am on the rack to know something of my family."

" Well, I will satisfy thy curiosity."

" Curiosity !" repeated Osmond, involuntarily, and resentfully ; " my anxiety you mean."

Watkins nodded.—" Thy father is—"



—He paused, and looked earnestly at Osmond.

“Dead!” said Osmond, in a faltering voice, horror-struck by this pause, which he imputed to compassion for his feelings.

“No, thou art mistaken,” replied Watkins, shaking his head, and smiling maliciously, as Osmond, on afterwards recalling his look at the moment to mind, recollected, “he is not dead, but in the house of bondage.”

“In prison!” exclaimed Osmond; “great Heaven, for what?”

“For not paying what he justly oweth.”

“And who—who,” demanded Osmond, in a tone of bitterness, and with a look of anguish, “who is the merciless creditor that has done this?—for merciless must he be who could deprive of his liberty a man whose principles, like my father’s, must be too well known, to permit a doubt to be entertained of his paying what he owed, if he had the power.”

“Thy father,” resumed Watkins, “contracted a large debt, as thou doubtless

knowest, since part of the borrowed money was, I understand, sent to supply thy necessities at the University, whither thou wast so foolishly sent."

"Your opinion on the subject is unasked," interrupted Osmond, haughtily; "if you have any intelligence to communicate respecting my father, and choose to impart it I would thank you to be as brief as possible."

Watkins again nodded, and with a ghastly smile of malice thus proceeded—"To that worthy nobleman, Lord O'Sinister, thy father as I was about imparting to thee, contracted a large debt."

Osmond started.—"My fears were then prophetic!" he involuntarily exclaimed; distractedly striking his forehead; "but go on—go on," he added, waving his hand to Watkins to proceed.

"The bond which the worthy peer received from thy father for the money he lent him, he gave as a reward for long and faithful services to a domestic of his, who being in want of a little

ready cash, sold the said bond unto me, upon which I called upon thy father for the payment of the same; and he not discharging my just demand I put him into the house of bondage, where verily he shall stay, until he has paid me the uttermost farthing."

"No doubt," cried Osmond, with a smile of bitterness, "since of course he whose vile agent you are, has instructed you to persecute him with the utmost rancour."

"I know not what thou meanest," returned Watkins, angrily.

"I mean," replied Osmond, "that a villain has planned the destruction of an innocent man, and engaged you to assist him in the business."

"Ah, I perceive," cried Watkins, spitefully, "thou retainest something of the old heaven, for thou wert always a saucy and presumptuous boy; but verily no wonder, for thy father was ever too sparing of the rod to thee. But if thou waxeth wroth, thou must quit my habitation, where the

voice of clamour is a stranger. I invited thee not to enter it, therefore I do no wrong in bidding thee quit it."

"Fear not," said Osmond, surveying him with forced composure, "that I shall make my visit too long; I know myself too well, not to be afraid of continuing much longer in your company."

"What, thou threatenest then," returned Watkins, changing colour; "if thou dost not take thyself off directly, thou wilt compel me to cry aloud."

"Thy crying aloud would avail thee but little, if I had decided on obeying the present impulse; but I should view myself with scorn, if I stooped to chastise such a miscreant as thou art; 'tis he who has set thee on to this, and not thou, his poor abject tool, that I shall single out for vengeance."

He then rushed from the cottage. The day was by this time almost closed in; but neither the deepening shades of approaching night, the loud howling of the wind, which had increased to a storm, nor yet the rain that accompanied it, were re-

garded by the unhappy Osmond; the dreadful situation of his family occupied every thought, engrossed every sense.— He became almost distracted as he reflected on this, unable as he was to devise any mode by which it might be alleviated; for of the real profits accruing from the situation he had held under the Duke D'Amalfi, but a few guineas, in consequence of the great expences incurred by travelling, now remained, and he knew not a being to whom he could look for sympathy, much less assistance, on the present occasion. In the midst of the agonizing reflections to which it gave rise, he suddenly recollected his not having inquired the prison of his father. To return, however, to the insolent and malicious Watkins, was not to be thought of. From the middle of the heath, therefore, into which he had unconsciously wandered, he was casting his eyes around in quest of another cottage, at which he might make the inquiry, when they accidentally fell upon a man in the garb of a labourer, a few paces from him, and who for some time had, though unper-

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ceived, been attentively regarding him. Ere Osmond had time to decide whether he would address him or not, the man drew near, and with a low but rustic bow, said—

“No offence, I hope, sir, but you seem, begging your pardon for saying so, to be in a kind of quandary, so if I can be of any service to you, command me.”

“Thank you, my friend,” replied Osmond; “if you are an inhabitant of this place, you can perhaps inform me where Mr. Munro is to be found?”

“Captain Munro! bless his heart, that I can; but,” as if suddenly recollecting himself, “you must first, if you please, be kind enough to tell me your business with him.”

“I am his son,” returned Osmond.

“What, master Osmond!” almost shouted the other; “dang it, who could have thought of this?”

“Methinks,” hastily exclaimed Osmond, “your voice is familiar to me.”

“Ah, you have heard it often enough to

remember it; many a trick has Tom Stubbs helped you to play."

"My honest friend," cried Osmond, extending his hand, and with something of a joyous sensation, for he had not only seen, but heard sufficient from his father, of the honest rustic to make him think highly of him, "I ask your pardon for not sooner recollecting you, but the shock I have received since my return hither, must be my excuse for not having done so. I expected to have been received by my family, instead of which——"

"I know, I know," interrupted Stubbs, almost sobbing.

"You said," rejoined Osmond, "you could inform me where to find my father."

"Yes, I can give you all the particulars you want to hear about him; but this is no place to tell the story in; the wind blows cold, and the rain is coming on faster and faster; and besides—besides," added the honest farmer, tenderly laying his hand upon the arm of Osmond, "you are wet already."

"No matter," returned Osmond, "I wish not to lose a moment in seeing my father."

"'Tis quite too late to see him to-night," said Stubbs, "and too dark, and too dismal, I am sure, to go to any distance; so you must come home with me, to my cottage; I cannot, 'tis true, give you a fine bed, but I'll give you a clean one, and what is more, a hearty welcome; yes, by goles, if I had jewels and gold to set before you, you'd be as welcome to them as to my bacon and eggs: so come along, come along, Mr. Osmond, and I pray you do not let your spirits sink; for according to the old saying, 'when things are at the worst, they'll mend.'—Your father is an honest and good man, and God has ever such in his special keeping."

The indignation with which the insolence of Watkins inspired him, had dried up the tears that burst from Osmond, at beholding the desertion of his native home; but at the kindness of Farmer Stubbs his dry and burning eye again became de-



lugged ; and forgetting that the darkness of the hour would conceal his emotion, he hastily passed his hand over his face.

Since he could not obtain an interview with his father that night, he readily accepted an invitation, that promised to afford him the melancholy pleasure of conversing about him.

Farmer Stubbs found his good dame busy in preparing supper against his return. He quickly announced his guest to her, and as quickly made him exchange his wet coat for a dry one. He then put him in possession of the warm seat, which he was wont to occupy himself in the chimney corner, threw some additional logs upon the fire, and called to his dame to produce a bottle of her elder wine, for the excellence of which she was famed throughout the neighbourhood. Not finding this call, however, obeyed with the promptness he expected, he arose from the table, surprised as well as angry, for his dame, he had always considered as good-natured and hospitable as himself, and,

beckoning her into another room, inquired the reason of her not having done what he desired?

“Why, Thomas,” replied she, “you know there was but little of the wine remaining——”

“Dang it,” exclaimed the farmer, retreating a few paces from her, and surveying her with a look of mingled scorn and ridicule, “art thou growing a miser in thy old days?”

“Noa, Thomas, noa ; God forbid ; but yesterday, when I went to poor Madam Munro, with the two woodcocks you shot, she looked so sadly, that I took it into my head she had not comfortable things to take ; so this morning meeting Jem Macallister going to D——, I brought him home with me, and sent her all the wine I had left, with my duty.”

“Did you?” said the farmer, in an altered accent, and again approaching his dame ; “then thou art a good girl still ; and dang me but thou shalt get a new hat at Easter, to prove that I think thee so. But,” thoughtfully, “’tis an awkward

thing, to be sure to mention a thing, and then not produce it, 'specially when one can't tell the reason why ; for I wouldn't, for the price of a new horse, have the poor youth know that his parents were beholden for any thing to such poor folks as we. Noa, noa, he's grieved, and sick enough at heart already, without knowing that. Ah, dame, hadst thou seen him, as I did, in the middle of the black heath—I verily thought he was some poor crazed being, going to make away with himself." Then, after a short pause—"Well, it can't be helped ; since we can't have wine, why we must be content with ale , so let's have a humming jug in no time, and plenty of sugar and ginger ; and, d'ye hear, be sure you cut some rashers off the best fitch, and rout about to get plenty of eggs."

Dame Stubbs nodded significantly, and the farmer hastened back to his dejected guest, at whose importunate request he speedily commenced the relation he had promised him, but which, in his language, being more prolix than was necessary, we shall give in our own.

The gallant husband of the unfortunate lady, against whom Lord O'Sinister so unhappily succeeded in his machinations, as mentioned in the beginning of this story, returned from the Continent, but to find the wife whom he had left blooming in health and beauty, and happy as conscious innocence, the smiles of fortune, and the esteem and affection of friends, could render her, in the last stage of a consumption, brought on by remorse. His grief and solicitude about her wrung from her a confession of her unworthiness; and at the grave, in which a few days after he saw her laid, he solemnly swore never to rest till he had revenged her wrongs and his own. This vow, by means not necessary to relate, Lord O'Sinister was quickly informed of, in consequence of which he immediately resolved on shifting his quarters, and remaining abroad, till assured he might return with safety—his attachment to this world being too great not to render him anxious to keep out of the way of any circumstance likely to send him out of it.

His passion for Elizabeth continued still

unabated ; but doubly armed as he now knew her to be by love and virtue against him, he by this time was convinced there was not a chance of ever succeeding by the common arts of seduction with her ; and accordingly, in pursuance of this conviction, conceived the project of trying what effect working her up to despair about her family would produce on her. In consequence, therefore, of this project, he had the bond which he had received from Munro delivered by the hands of a confidential agent, just as he was on the point of embarking for the Continent, into those of Watkins, whose principles and hatred to Munro he was fully apprised of by Jenkins, with instructions for him how to act, and what tale to tell concerning it.

After Munro had been a few weeks imprisoned, the agent above-mentioned was to deliver to Elizabeth a letter from his lordship, stating his having heard by chance, at his seat in Derbyshire, (for it was his intention, for fear of a pursuit, to conceal where he really was,) of the confinement of her father, and also that he would

instantly have released him from it, but for having many powerful reasons for believing he had been most ungrateful for former kindness; notwithstanding which, however, he was willing to restore him not only to liberty, but to place him in affluence for the remainder of his life, provided she would accede to his wishes, by giving up a young man, whose friends, even supposing he continued constant, which was a very doubtful matter, would never consent to their union, and permitting the person who delivered this letter to her to convey her to the arms of his lordship.

Did we choose to launch into similies, we might say, that a Jew never more rejoiced at an opportunity of making a good bargain, or a miser of adding to his hoard, than did Watkins at obtaining one of gratifying the hatred he bore Munro, for repelling the efforts pride actuated him to make, to be on familiar terms with him. The day after he became possessed of this long-wished for opportunity, he repaired to his house, and on inquiring for him, was ushered into the parlour, where he found

him seated, evidently indisposed in mind and body, his wound still continuing very painful, and his spirits being dreadfully depressed by the unsettled state into which the long confinement and expences it occasioned had thrown his affairs, and the disappointment of his expectations relative to Lord O'Sinister, of whose having offered him a situation adequate to the one it had compelled him to resign, he had entertained no doubt. With that distant civility which his forward manners obliged him to use, he inquired, on Watkins's entering the parlour, into the cause which had procured him the favour of a visit from him ?

Watkins, who was dexterous in the art of tormenting, did not gratify his curiosity, until he had completely exhausted his patience, and agitated his mind. When, at length, he explained it, astonishment for a few minutes deprived Munro of utterance.

“ Good God ! ” he exclaimed, on recovering a little from the shock he had received, “ there must certainly be some mistake in all this ; the bond which I gave

to Lord O'Sinister, and you say his servant has sold to you, was not payable in less than five years, and then only by instalments."

"Well, though thou doubtest my word," cried Watkins, "thou wilt not perhaps doubt the evidence of thine own eyes; and as he spoke, he drew forth the bond from his bosom, and unfolded it to the view of Munro, who hastily glancing over it, perceived with amazement, and it might almost be said with horror, for little short of that did he feel at the idea of being in the power of such a man as he considered Watkins, that it was payable on demand. The livid paleness of his cheek, the dropping of his eyelids on his ascertaining this, more forcibly proclaimed, than any language could have done, what he felt at the moment. After a silence of a few minutes, during which he appeared buried in thought, he lifted his heavy eyes to Watkins, who, all the time, had, with the most exulting malice, been regarding him, and begged he would let the business rest as it was at present until he



had written to Lord O'Sinister on the subject, and inquired into what appeared to him at present both a mysterious and treacherous transaction.

"At all events," added he, "to have recourse to hostile measures against me would be of no service whatever to you, as it is totally out of my power at present to liquidate any part of the debt. At the very moment you entered, I was on the point of writing to his lordship, to apologize for being unable to do so at present, as about this time I conceived he might expect payment."

The crafty Watkins, apprehensive of his real intentions respecting him being disappointed, if he gave him any reason to suspect them, immediately replied—


"Do not trouble thyself unnecessarily; whatever thou mayest think to the contrary, I am not destitute of charity and loving-kindness; write at thy leisure to the great man, and when thou hast received his answer, let me know, and I will call upon thee, to have this affair settled to our mutual satisfaction."

He then departed, leaving Munro not only surprised at his conduct, but penetrated with remorse by it, since it led him to believe that he had wronged him, in the opinion he had so long harboured of him.

That a man of Munro's understanding should so easily be imposed on, may appear unnatural to some; but let it be understood by those who think so, that his knowledge of the artifices of life, without which the weariness of distrust seldom becomes the inmate of the virtuous mind, bore no proportion to his knowledge of its sorrows: he would have been happy to have concealed from his wife and daughter the cause of Watkins's visit, but at the time of receiving it they were unfortunately in an adjoining room, and so overheard the whole of the conversation between them: but great as was the disquietude this gave to Mrs. Munro, it was trifling compared with that Elizabeth felt, owing to her knowledge of the real character of his lordship, and consequent de-

velopment of the motives which had actuated him to act in such a manner with regard to the bond. That he had resolved on her destruction, or that of her family, she clearly saw ; but the terrible apprehensions which this conviction inspired, she sedulously concealed, persuaded that their divulgement might do much mischief, but no good, since she well knew her father had not the means of avoiding any evil with which he might be threatened, and that he could not hear of Lord O'Sinister's vile designs respecting her, without being irritated to some measure, that would not fail of aggravating the malice of his lordship.

To Providence she looked up for frustrating the intentions of this their unprovoked and persecuting foe. She prayed too, more fervently than ever, for the speedy return of Delacour, whom she considered as a kind of bulwark against his lordship. She tried also to prevent herself from sinking into despair, by hoping that, even if things came to the worst—



even if her father were imprisoned, still his confinement would only last till Delacour came back.

Munro only delayed, after the departure of Watkins, writing to Lord O'Sinister, till he had a little collected himself. He entered into a warm expostulation with his lordship, on the deception which had been practised on him, besought him by return of post, for he supposed him at his house in London, to let him know to what it was to be imputed; and ended by declaring, that should his lordship decline interfering with Watkins on the subject, he should conceive himself cruelly treated.

That his lordship should have put it in the power of any one to molest him, he could only account for by concluding some one had injured him in his opinion; but then, if this were the case, what an ignoble mind did such a step augur his lordship possessed of!

Munro was not in a state of health to bear either an increase of anxiety, or violent agitation, without injury. Nothing but a dread of alarming his wife and

daughter prevented his keeping his bed. The day after Watkins's visit, he felt himself so extremely indisposed. Towards evening he grew so much worse, that he could no longer conceal his situation from them; and soon after tea, was on the point of withdrawing to his chamber, when a loud knock at the hall door caused him to pause: on its being opened, a rough voice was heard inquiring for him. Munro, fancying there was some hesitation in the servant's answer, nodded to Elizabeth to open the parlour door. She obeyed, but started back in affright at beholding three ruffianly-looking men close to it, who instantly rushed in, and with a ferocious glance round the apartment, approached her father. Munro's heart almost misgave him at their sight; still, however, with tolerable composure, he inquired their business with him?—

“Why not the most agreeable business in the world, to be sure, captain,” cried the foremost of them; “but such things will sometimes happen, and he smiled as he probably thought facetiously, “will sometimes happen in

best regulated families. We have a writ against you, at the suit of one Jeremiah Watkins, of this neighbourhood."

At this confirmation of his fears Munro involuntarily raised his hands and eyes to Heaven, in astonishment at the treachery and cruelty of the wretch; while Mrs. Munro, with a deep sigh, dropped back, fainting, on the chair, from which she had started in terror, at the entrance of the ruffians.

Munro with difficulty now raised his enfeebled frame from his chair, and made an effort to approach his wife, but was prevented by one of the men.

"Come, come, captain," exclaimed he, interposing between them, "I ask pardon, but your lady is in good hands, and no time must be lost, for it is a long walk to D——."

Elizabeth turned wildly at these words from her mother, and almost shrieking, repeated—"To D——! Oh good God!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands, "surely you will not think of taking him to D—— at such an hour, and in such a night as

this, (for it was both stormy and wet ;) he is ill, and it will be his death, perhaps, if you do. Oh, I conjure you," dropping almost unconsciously on her knees, "if he be indeed your prisoner, let him remain here at least this night."

"Sorry I can't oblige you, Miss," replied one of the men, "but the thing is utterly impossible ; we must do our duty, let the consequences to others be what they may."

Elizabeth, but without changing her attitude, turned her imploring eyes from him to her father. Munro made an effort to speak, but an unsuccessful one ; agony of mind had completely overcome him ; and as he involuntarily leant upon one of the men, he motioned with his languid hand to another to bring him a glass of water from the sideboard. The man obeyed, and after he had swallowed it, he recovered sufficiently to be enabled to bid his daughter rise.

"We must part, my dearest girl," he cried, pressing her to his bosom, on which she had sunk, "but it will only be for a

few hours. In the morning you and your mother, you know, can both come to me to D——; in the interim I conjure you to exert yourself; the storm, I allow you, is rough, but by calling reason and fortitude to our aid, we may preserve ourselves from being completely wrecked by it. Your mother will need both support and consolation, to enable her to bear up against the rude shock she has just received; do not, therefore, by yielding to your present feelings, incapacitate yourself from offering such to her, and thus render bad worse."



CHAP. IV.

*"Yet Providence, that ever-waking eye,  
Looks down with pity on the feeble toil  
Of mortals lost to hope."*

THOMSON.

"OH, cruel and obdurate father," involuntarily, and in an under tone, exclaimed Munro, as he gazed on the pale countenance of his affrighted daughter, who in vain endeavoured to make the promise he required of her, and then on the inanimate form of his wife, "what hast thou not made me and mine suffer ! but for thee, this hour of bitterness would never have been experienced."

The men becoming impatient for him to depart, and being also anxious to do so

himself, ere his wife regained her senses, lest the distress he had no doubt she would betray on recovering should destroy the composure he wished to maintain, he no longer hesitated to attend them. With trembling hands Elizabeth assisted him on with his great-coat, and with an almost bursting heart, followed him to the gate, where he again strained her to his bosom, again besought her to exert herself, and try to administer some little comfort to her, by reminding her they should meet on the morrow.

The anguish which Elizabeth, for fear of aggravating his, had struggled against in his presence, burst forth the moment he was out of sight. The event that had just befallen him, now that it had really taken place, she considered as a much more disastrous one than when she had merely apprehended it. The hopes she had clung to, in order to prevent herself from sinking beneath the anticipation of this misfortune, had now entirely forsaken her. Delacour might, she reflected, never return ; or, if he did, it might be without

the power (for an instant she would not suppose—no, she knew his noble nature too well, to permit her to think that it might be without inclination) to succour her father ; if so, his sun was for ever set, she feared—she dreaded he had for ever quitted his home.

The night was stormy—rain fell too in large drops ; but the agonizing idea of her father's sufferings rendered Elizabeth at the moment regardless of all besides.—She continued leaning against the gate at which he had parted from her, till roused by the voice of her mother, who, on recovering and missing her husband, had wildly started from her seat, and, with an intention of following him to prison, rushed from the house.

Elizabeth interposing between her and the gate, conjured her to give up this intention for the present, as one that could not fail of drawing disappointment and additional sorrow on her, since there was not the least likelihood of her being able to overtake her father, or gain admission to him that night. Mrs. Munro, however,

persisted in it, till Elizabeth, in an agony of distress, dropped kneeling at her feet, nor even then relinquished it, till her maternal fears were awakened by the death-like paleness of her daughter, and the wildness of her looks.

“Till to-morrow, then,” cried she, as she eagerly raised her from the ground, and returned with her into the house, “I will endeavour to control my impatience to rejoin your father; but then we meet to part no more; yes,” continued she, clasping her hands together, and looking up to Heaven, with all the enthusiasm of tenderness, “still shall my arm pillow his head, still will I exert myself to mitigate his anguish, still pour the balm of love into his soul, and lull him to his rest, praising my God for permitting me to do so.”

On this night, the most wretched, though many were the sorrowful ones they had passed, Mrs. Munro or Elizabeth ever knew, we shall not dwell; suffice it to say, it was passed without either thinking of

rest, and that at the first glimpse of day they prepared for their visit to D——.

As they were on the point of setting off, Stubbs made his appearance.—He had heard the preceding night of the arrest of poor Munro, but at too late an hour to think of inquiring after the ladies. He now came for that purpose; and also to ask whether he could be of any service to them or the captain, on whom he mentioned his intention of calling immediately, though not without shame as well as sorrow, he protested, at the idea of his having been the means of introducing him to a person capable of serving him as Lord O'Sinister had done.—“But to a certainty,” added he, “his lordship must be in a state of madness at present, or he never could have been guilty of such conduct.”

“Oh that madness had been the cause of it, for then a hope might be entertained of receiving reparation for it,” Elizabeth with difficulty prevented herself from saying.

She gratefully accepted Stubbs's offer of

attending her and her mother to D——, and carrying some things which she had packed up for her father.

No carriage was to be procured in the neighbourhood, and exhausted as she was with grief and agitation, Mrs. Munro, with difficulty, although supported by the arm of her daughter, reached the prison of her husband.

The gloomy and miserable apartment in which she found him, the only furniture of which consisted of a wooden bedstead, on which the gaoler's wife had contented herself with spreading a rug for his accommodation, it not being the custom, she informed him, to provide beds for the prisoners, and the idea of the dreadful hours he must have passed by himself in such a place, did not tend to revive her dejected spirits.

“ True,” cried Munro, as with one arm he clasped his weeping wife, and with the other his equally shocked daughter to his bosom, “ my pillow last night was a hard one; but with all its hardness, many downy ones have been rendered more in-

tolerable, by the thorns a guilty conscience has strewn over them. Besides, how many nobler heads than mine have rested on a worse one ; how many, grown grey in the service of their country, been without a place on which to repose. 'Tis sometimes requisite for us to look into the situation of others, to check murmurs at our own."

Munro had passed the night in reflecting and arranging plans for the future—the dreary future he feared.

Persuaded, by a minute retrospect of the conduct of Lord O'Sinister, that there was but little hope of his interfering with Watkins concerning him, and still less, from his knowledge of Watkins's disposition, of his being brought into any terms, he had made up his mind to continuing in prison ; and in consequence thereof had decided on immediately endeavouring to procure some person to undertake the management of his farm, and also on parting with his house, provided his wife insisted on taking up her abode with him, which he rather imagined she would.

A few minutes conversation with her sufficing to convince him such was her determination, he sent for Stubbs, of whose having attended them to the prison, and waiting below to know whether he had any commands for him, Elizabeth had informed him, his well-known honesty, and the attachment he had always evinced for him, rendering him anxious to have him undertake the management of his affairs, and briefly explained his present wishes and intentions, and had the satisfaction of finding him willing to undertake what he desired.

This matter being arranged, Elizabeth was deputed to return to Heathwood, for the purpose of packing up such things as were requisite for their accommodation in their new abode, and discharging their little household, Munro conceiving their economy at present could not be of too rigid a nature.

Elizabeth feeling that exertion was absolutely requisite, to prevent her sinking into utter despondence, could not be pre-



vailed on to let a carriage be procured to take her back.

The day was gloomy, but just as she came within sight of Heathwood, the sun breaking through the clouds, that had till then obscured his brightness, and striking full upon the windows and heights in the rear, shed a dazzling cheerfulness o'er the scene, that, from the contrast it presented to the one she had just quitted, heightened all the gloomy horrors of the latter in her imagination; but neither this cheerfulness—the wild and thrilling melody of the birds that thronged the adjacent brakes—the soft lowing of the cattle that fed in the vicinity, and was still echoed by the neighbouring hills—nor yet the grateful fragrance of the shrubs that clustered round the house, half hiding its glittering windows, could now, as heretofore, impart a charm to sooth or animate the spirits of Elizabeth. On the contrary, she became still more dejected, since in proportion to the delightfulness of what had so long been the residence of her father, was her regret

at his being perhaps for ever torn from it. Stubbs left her at the gate, for the purpose of preparing the cart, in which he had offered to convey the packages to D——, and sending his wife to assist her in packing.

The tears which Elizabeth had hitherto with difficulty suppressed, gushed from her on entering the house, where a melancholy stillness, disordered apartments, half opened shutters, and grates destitute of fire, proclaimed its sad abandonment. In the luxury of grief, however, she did not permit herself to indulge; she entered without loss of time upon the task delegated to her, the most distressing part of which, owing to the pain she had reason to believe it would give them, was her being obliged to inform the two domestics their services were no longer wanting.

Having put up the light articles herself, and selected such of the heavy ones as were required, she left the packing of these to the servants and Dame Stubbs, (who, in pursuance of her husband's desire, had hastened to her) and repaired to the

garden, in order to indulge without restraint the feelings that swelled her heart almost to bursting.

The recollections which this delightful spot revived in her mind, were not by any means calculated to alleviate the bitterness of these. Not a walk, not a shade, not a shrub, almost, which did not recal the memory of some happy or interesting hour. In its bowers, which the winds of autumn were now daily stripping of their gorgeous foliage, still had the summer evenings worn away in pleasing converse, or innocent amusements. In its winding walks, its sheltering grove, the approach of spring, its protruding buds, and gradual renovation of a faded world had been hailed by her with enthusiastic delight. Here, too had she wandered with Delacour—with him from whom she now feared she was for ever separated; for except the situation of her parents changed for the better, she solemnly resolved never to enter into any engagement that could render her liable to be removed from them—Here, too, had his delighted eye

ranged with her's o'er nature's beauties ;  
and here—oh here, had he held her to  
his heart, and vowed perpetual constancy.

“ And must this beloved spot,” she exclaimed, with a burst of anguish at the idea, “ so endeared, so hallowed by tender recollections, must it pass into the hands of strangers?—Oh, cruel and perfidious man,” she added, her thoughts suddenly recurring to Lord O'Sinister, “ what a dreadful use do you make of the bounty of Heaven !”

An approaching step caused her to turn, and with mingled surprise and indignation, she beheld Watkins. He had seen her returning to the house from D——, and being anxious to have a little conversation in private with her, followed her steps, and finding the hall door open stole in unperceived after her.

Elizabeth started at so unexpectedly beholding him, and obeying the impulse of indignation, directly hurried from him—He followed.

“ Why dost thou fly me ?” he cried—  
“ I am not a wolf in sheep's clothing, that

thou needest fear me. I pray thee let me commune with thee a little."

In vain, however, would he have implored her to do this, but that it suddenly occurred to her that he might have come for the purpose of making some pleasing proposition relative to her father; and accordingly stopping and turning towards him, she desired to know his business with her.

"Verily," replied he, in a tone such as she had never before heard him speak in, and with a strange expression of countenance, "it is to tell thee that thou art young and fair to look upon, and——"

Hastily interrupting him, Elizabeth, with flashing eyes and kindling cheek, bade him begone, if his intention was to offend her.

"Nay, in truth it is not," cried he, in deprecating accents: only hear me out, and thou wilt find I have no such intention."

"Be brief then," returned Elizabeth, somewhat haughtily.

He nodded, and thus went on—"Thou

art young and fair, as I have already said, but unhappily my wife is neither. On the contrary, she is well stricken in years, and, moreover, is troubled with the cholic, and the phthisic, and the rheumatics; and the quack doctor who was in these parts last year, and to whom I gave a golden guinea for his opinion of her case, said she could not possibly last much longer; now, therefore, if thou wilt promise me that I shalt find favour in thy sight, and that when she goeth the way of all flesh, thou and I shalt be one, I will without delay take thy father out of the house of bondage, and wait his own time for the payment of what he oweth me."

For a few minutes surprise and indignation took from Elizabeth the power of utterance; on regaining it she commanded him, in accents indicative of the feelings he had excited, to leave her—"I cannot find words," she exclaimed, "adequate to express my abhorrence of your insolence and treachery—Begone, therefore, I say, directly, or I shall with-

out further hesitation have you turned hence."

"Ah," with a malicious grin, and his cadaverous countenance flushed with rage and spite, "I should be glad to know who thou wouldst apply to for that purpose; since thy father, by his folly, has put it out of his own power to befriend thee, thou wilt not find many, I fancy, who will turn champions for thee; so thou hadst better in time humble thy pride to thy fortunes, and not threaten where thou canst not harm—'tis my pleasure to stay longer here, in vain, therefore, wilt thou bid me begone; and as to thy saying thou wouldst get some one to turn me hence, I should laugh to scorn any one who attempted to do so.

"Indeed!" exclaimed a voice with which he was well acquainted, and instantly Stubbs made his appearance from behind a hedge, where he had overheard the whole of the above conversation, having, under the idea of his being about some mischief, in consequence of seeing

him slyly stealing towards the house, followed him thither—"We shall see that, for if you do not march off as fast as those spider legs of yours will carry you, I shall make bold to give your worship a shove."

"Nay," cried Watkins, changing colour, and shewing anything but an inclination to laugh, "I know no right thou hast either to give me a shove or bid me get hence."


"As to that," returned Stubbs, with his usual coolness, "I am not the first man, by many, who has done what he had no right to do; however, I think I have a right to do what I have now threatened; and to a certainty, I will, if you provoke me, for 'tis the duty of every man to serve his fellow-creatures, more especially an unprotected female. You said, if I understood you right, that Miss Munro would not find it an easy matter now to get a friend; but that's not the first falsehood you told, and I'll be sworn it won't be the last. The daughter of such a man as her father is will never want a friend in



heaven or on earth. So begone, I say begone, thou oppressor of the oppressed, nor ever dare to shew thy face again, where, in place of happiness, thou hast introduced sorrow. Begone, I say, and bless thy stars for my having let thee off so quietly, for if I did as I wish, I'd make thee kiss the ground for thy audacity—Thou look up to Miss Munro !—thou, to the daughter of a gentleman !—By goles, I know not whether to wonder most at thy wickedness or impudence.”

“ Nay, beware how thou slanderest me,” cried Watkins, but retreating as he spoke, behind Elizabeth, whom a fear of the good-natured Stubbs bringing himself into some scrape on her account, should she leave them together, prevented from immediately retreating to the house ; “ I know of no wickedness thou canst charge me with.”

“ God forbid I should accuse myself of half so much ! but you'll yet meet with your punishment for all, I dare say—Yes, yes, I make no doubt you'll yet be made to feel for all you have made others suffer.



The few ill-gotten pounds you have scraped together mayn't always last—riches maketh unto themselves wings, and fleeth away ; and often when people think themselves most secure, they are in most danger—Job, to wit. You who are so deep read in scripture cannot but know how, when he thought himself at the height of his glory, the four corners of his dwelling were smote by the winds of Heaven, and that he had perished ; and by the Lord, as I passed by your house this morning, I spied a huge crack in one of the corners, which, for any thing one can tell to the contrary,” and he nodded significantly at Watkins, “ may be the beginning of troubles.”

“ Verily,” returned Watkins, in the most spiteful accents, “ I care not if thou spied a thousand cracks, for the landlord repaireth all damages, and the mason he employeth is a kinsfolk of mine, and he and I understand one another.”

“ No doubt,” cried Stnbbs, with an arch sneer, again nodding, “ and so do I understand you both—Here's a pretty

scoundrel," he added, " does mischief in order to get money ! So I suppose if you insured at one of the fire-offices, we should soon have a bonfire in the village."

" Neighbour, once for all, I tell thee," quoth Watkins, with increasing venom in his voice and countenance, " If thou persistest in traducing me, thou wilt compel me to lay the cudgel of chastisement across thy shoulders, as Balaam did across the shoulders of his ass."

" By the Lord, but I must be a greater ass than Balaam's beast was though, if I let you," said Stubbs ; and glancing his eye around, somewhat inflamed with indignation, he perceived a gardner's spade upon the ground, which snatching up—" Begone, I say again, begone," cried he.

" No, 'tis my pleasure," returned Watkins, determined, if possible, from his unwillingness to be overcome in the presence of Elizabeth, to maintain his ground, " to tarry longer here."

" Then 'tis my pleasure that you should not," cried Stubbs ; and darting towards

him, he presented the spade, as if it was really his intention to shovel him from the place.

Watkins no longer attempted to remonstrate or resist ; he danced round Elizabeth with the greatest agility, and then betook himself to flight. Stubbs, irritated and anxious to expose him to derision, pursued. In his haste to avoid him, Watkins plumped headlong into a horse-pond, midway between his own house and the one he had just quitted ; with the greatest difficulty, and all covered with slime, he got out of it, and continued his career, still followed by Stubbs.

The astonishment of Mrs. Watkins, at seeing her husband dripping like a water-god, and out of breath with terror, and running dart into the house pursued by Stubbs, also panting from the latter cause, was too great for description.

“ Procure assistance,” cried Watkins, retreating to an inner room, “ for that wicked man,” pointing to Stubbs, “ chaceth me with evil intentions.”

Mrs. Watkins, like an obedient wife,

was hastening to the door, for the purpose of doing what she was desired, when seizing her by the wrist, Stubbs entreated her to listen quietly to him for a minute.

“ ’Tis now, Mrs. Watkins,” said he, “ three or four and twenty years at least, since you and I first became acquainted, and during this time I don’t think you ever heard any thing bad of me.”

“ Why no, truly, I can’t say I ever heard any evil of thee.”

“ Why then, I think you may give credit to what I shall tell you.”

“ Thou canst not deny, surely, that thou hast thrown my spouse into great tribulation.”

“ No, but you can’t be angry with me for having done so, since it was by taking your part—yes, sly as he looks there, I surprised him making love, boasting of your having got the cholic, and the phthisic, and the devil knows what, and so that of course it might soon be expected you would lie under the sod ; and thereupon I got so angry with him, for speaking in such a manner of such a good prudent

wife as you have always been to him, and wishing you dead, that, by the Lord, for the life of me, I couldn't act otherwise than I did."

"Oh the wicked one!" exclaimed Mrs. Watkins, who being a little inclined to jealousy, from a consciousness of not being an over-agreeable helpmate, readily believed what Stubbs related to her—"who could have thought of such a thing!"

"Aye, who to be sure: but then remember, dame, smooth water runs deep,"

"And who is the cockatrice who has enticed him from my bosom?"

"Oh, no matter; 'tis a person that merits no hard names, and despises him too much to bestow a thought on him; so ask no more questions about her, but think of some way of punishing him—You have fifty pounds a-year, you know, at your own disposal."

Mrs. Watkins nodded.

"Then will it away from him, and take my word he won't be in so great a hurry for your death as he now is."

"Verily thou counsellest well," returned

Mrs. Watkins; "I will, therefore, do as thou advisest, as soon as I can get hold of a man of the law."

"Oh, then you shall soon have hold of one, for I am going straight to D——, and will send lawyer Claw over to you immediately."

"Do, and thou wilt confer a kindness on me, for I am much vexed, and longeth to be revenged for the infidelity I have met with."

"To be sure, or you wouldn't be a woman of spirit—Dang me, if I was you," and Stubbs looked a little archly, "if I wouldn't try to make him a little jealous also."

Mrs. Watkins, notwithstanding her vexation, simpered a little at this speech: her ghastly countenance, however, quickly recovered its natural acerbity on the re-appearance of her husband, who, during the above conversation, which nevertheless had not been lost upon him, had been shifting his clothes in an inner room. He now attempted not only to deny what Stubbs had alleged against him, but to

put in a caveat against the hostile intentions of his wife; but in vain did he try to invalidate the testimony of one, or subdue the resentment of the other; and Stubbs departed, exulting at the thought of having him punished, in some degree, for his hypocrisy and impudence.

On re-entering the house, he found poor Elizabeth in the parlour, and in an agony of tears; the specimen which the audacious Watkins had given her, of the insults her now unprotected situation rendered her liable to, having completely overpowered her spirits.

He and his dame exerted themselves to the utmost, to endeavour to console her; and Elizabeth, convinced that to hearts like theirs, no return for kindness could be half so acceptable as a persuasion of that kindness being of service, forced herself to appear benefited by theirs. In the present state of her feelings, however, so painful was it to her to do this, that she could not avoid rejoicing, when the farmer informed her he was ready to set out to D——.

The prison of her father was a building



of ancient date, and had for a considerable period been the residence of a noble family, the head of which forfeited both his title and property, by the active part he took in the memorable rebellion of forty-five. Soon after the confiscation of his fortune, this, the ancient seat of his ancestors, in the stately halls of which bards had often rehearsed the exploits of the valiant, was converted into a prison, for which its strength and healthy situation rendered it well calculated. Great part of its ancient park still remained attached to it, affording a pleasant walk to such as loved the shade of melancholy boughs, and the contemplation of objects calculated to send their souls back to the days of old.

Munro found no difficulty in procuring such apartments as he required; but though these were reasonable, and he endeavoured to live in the most economical manner, denying to himself indulgences the impaired state of his health rendered almost indispensable, he soon found himself dreadfully straitened with

regard to money matters, a circumstance particularly distressing at this period; the anxiety of Mrs. Munro's mind having brought on a nervous fever, that rendered her in need of many things he was thus without the power of procuring her.

In this exigence, Elizabeth exerted herself to the utmost of her power to assist her parents. She excelled in fine works, and secretly applied to the priest, who from time to time still continued to visit her mother, and was a truly benevolent man, to endeavour to get her employment in this line amongst the families he visited.

The good man, at once applauding and affected by the motive that induced her to make this application to him, promised to do all in his power to serve her. He kept his word, but without being able to render her any essential service, knowing but few families in the neighbourhood.

Six weeks—six heavy and melancholy

weeks passed away, without any change for the better taking place in the situation of her parents, when one morning at the expiration of this period, as she was returning from a shop in D——, where she had been to make some trifling purchase, she was overtaken and accosted by an elderly man, of rather a genteel appearance, who having inquired whether her name was Munro, and being answered in the affirmative, drew a letter from his pocket, and presented it to her, with an entreaty for her to peruse it on the spot.

Confused and surprised, Elizabeth hesitated for a few minutes what to do; at length, on being urged in a still more vehement manner to an immediate perusal, she broke the seal, but with a hand rendered tremulous by agitation; and casting her eyes over the contents, perceived, with amazement that could only be equalled by the indignation its purport gave rise to, (this being the letter his lordship had ordered to be delivered to her

after she had had some weeks experience of the bitterness of confinement,) that it came from Lord O'Sinister.

"There, sir," cried she, hastily folding it up, her pale cheek flushed to crimson by the indignant feelings of her soul—"There, sir," flinging it to its vile bearer; "your returning that letter to his lordship will better explain to him my sentiments relative to its contents, than any answer I could send to it—He may afflict, but whilst I retain that self-approbation of which he seeks to deprive me, it will not be in his power to humble me—As for you—but," turning scornfully from him, "I will not degrade myself by holding further converse with such a being—The man capable of accepting such an employment as you have done, must be invulnerable to reproach, destitute of every principle of honour, generosity, and feeling—the vilest of his species, the most abject of mortals."

"Nay, young lady, this is being what I call rather severe," returned the audacious emissary of his lordship, endeavour-

ing at the same time to obstruct her progress.

Elizabeth pushed by him, and flew, rather than ran, to the prison, towards which, whilst speaking to him, she had been rapidly advancing, forgetting from the agitation into which the incident had thrown her, that by so doing she might expose him to the observation of her father, (their sitting-room overlooking the street,) and thus, perhaps, be compelled to enter into explanations she had many reasons for wishing to avoid.

What she thought not of really happened. Munro, soon after she went out, sauntered towards a window, whence he beheld the whole of the scene between her and the vile agent of Lord O'Sinister. Her gestures left him no room to doubt her having been grossly insulted ; and now—now he felt with agony the loss of liberty—now that he beheld his child insulted, without having the power of flying to her aid, and chastising the wretch who had meanly taken advantage of her unprotected situation to offend her.

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Breathless, and trembling in every limb, Elizabeth would gladly have kept out of his sight, till her agitation had in some degree subsided, but that she had no other alternative, the chamber she occupied being only accessible through the sitting-room, than to remain exposed to the stare of a number of the other prisoners, or return to him, to which, of course, she gave the preference.

Having, with all the calmness she could assume, and looks purposely averted from his, inquired after her mother, who had lain down before she went out, she was gliding along the side of the room to her chamber, when Munro hastily approaching, seized her by the arm, and drawing her towards a window—

“Elizabeth,” said he, in a tone almost of sternness, and fixing his penetrating eyes on her face, “I have just witnessed a scene that requires explanation.”

Elizabeth started—her cheek alternately faded and flushed—every look evinced distress and confusion. At length, after the hesitation of a few minutes, she attempted

to stammer out something of having been mistaken for another person.

Her father looked at her with still more scrutinizing earnestness—"Elizabeth," said he, in an accent such as he had never before addressed her in, "no prevarication—by Heaven, I'll have the truth."

Shocked and alarmed, Elizabeth dropt kneeling at his feet; still, however, she endeavoured to avoid the explanation he demanded. Her efforts to do so, however, proved unavailing; the paternal anxiety of her father was too much awakened, to permit him to allow of any evasion; and by degrees the whole of Lord O'Sinister's conduct towards her was unfolded to him.

The emotions to which the disclosure gave rise, may easier be conceived than described; with horror at her narrow escape from the snares of the villain, was mingled indignation and rage, at the deceptions practised on himself, which the particulars she gave, or, more correctly speaking, he extorted from her, fully elucidated. For a few minutes he felt too bewildered, too agitated, to be able to articu-

late more than, like Goldsmith's good-natured man—

“How have I been deceived!”

With fervent piety his heart then ascended in thanksgiving to Heaven for the preservation of his child—“Oh thou,” he cried, one hand resting on the shoulder of the weeping and still kneeling Elizabeth, the other raised in supplicating attitude—“Oh thou, who hast hitherto protected the innocence of my child, still, still vouchsafe to make her thy care! Should it be thy divine will to call me hence, ere the allurements of youth and beauty are faded, oh, raise her up some tender guardian to supply my place, and guard her from the perils to which they expose her!”

It was settled that nothing should be said to her mother respecting the baseness of Lord O'Sinister. Nothing, however, could prevent Munro from writing an upbraiding letter to him, in which, after fully expatiating on the enormity of his conduct, he bade him beware, if he wished to avoid




being held up to the contempt and detestation he merited, of again insulting his daughter.

From this period, another six weeks passed away without anything occurring to interrupt, in any degree, the now tiresome monotony of their days ; at the expiration of which, Munro found himself so cruelly embarrassed, as to decide upon addressing his father. At first he resolved on concealing from his wife and daughter his application to him, lest it should inspire hopes that might expose them to disappointment ; but the agitation into which penning it threw him, took from him the power of adhering to this resolution.

The day after he dispatched it, an answer was returned. Munro attempted to open it, but the agitation occasioned by the idea of perusing a letter that would, in all probability, decide his fate, was so great, that he was under the necessity of resigning it to Elizabeth, who was alone present.

Their astonishment at its contents was



unspeakable, nor was their anguish less; but, without dwelling on these, it is necessary to relate, that a short period before the imprisonment of Munro, one dreary night, when the whirling tempest raved along the heath, and foul and fierce all winter drove along the darkened air, a gentleman and his servant, on horseback, missing the beaten track, applied at the house of Munro for directions to regain it.

Munro, whose native hospitality and benevolence nothing could impair, not satisfied with giving them the required information, kindly invited them to alight, and take shelter in his dwelling, till the fury of the storm had abated.

His invitation was joyfully accepted; the servant was sent to enjoy the comforts of his kitchen fire, and the master brought in to participate in those of his parlour.

Scarce had he entered it, ere Munro recognized in him an old acquaintance, of the name of Macintosh, a baronet residing in the neighbourhood of Glengary.

This recognition, however, led to no

conversation of a particular nature, nor produced any alteration in the manner of either—One still remained lively and communicative, the other courteous and unembarrassed.

The mind of Munro was just at this juncture too much occupied by the unpleasantness of his situation, to permit him to dwell on any thing which did not immediately concern himself; he, therefore, scarcely bestowed a thought on Sir James after he had quitted his habitation.

But not so Sir James—his thoughts continued to hover round the dwelling of Munro, long after he had taken his departure from it; in a word, the beauty of Elizabeth had made a complete conquest of his heart; and of no object but her could he think, at least with any degree of pleasure to himself.

He was at this period somewhat advanced in life, and in his person betrayed both the ravages of time and dissipation, to which he had always been inclined, but without suffering his propensity to it.

to involve him in any difficulties, his avarice and ambition being fully equal to his passion for pleasure.

Fortune smiled not on his youth, but love made amends for the deficiencies; his then handsome figure and insinuating address so recommending him to the good graces of a lady of large fortune, near Glengary, but unpossessed of any attractions but what she derived from that fortune, as to induce her to bestow her hand on him. Contrary to his expectations, and with equal truth it might be said, his wishes, (for she was considerably older than himself,) she continued to maintain her post in this world at the period which again introduced Munro to his knowledge. Notwithstanding this circumstance, however, he would have had no hesitation in endeavouring to create for himself an interest in the fair bosom of Elizabeth; but that he feared dangerous consequences might result to him, from deceiving the daughter of such a man as Munro.

A few days previous to the receipt of Munro's letter at Glengary, his matrimo-

nial fetters were broken by the hand of death. Scarcely did he find himself freed from them, ere he conceived the project of endeavouring at once to gratify both his love and his avarice, by trying to prevail on Mrs. Munro to persuade her husband to make Elizabeth his heiress, and bestow her on him.

That he knew he had some influence with Mrs. Munro, or he never would have thought of such a project, may readily be supposed. She had for years been a constant visitor at his house, the servile homage she paid Lady Macintosh, in order to obtain the countenance of a woman of her rank and respectability in the neighbourhood, having rendered her a great favourite with her ladyship, whose pride was excessive; and Sir James, from his wish to stand well with all who could in any degree contribute to his gratification, had the address to persuade her she was equally esteemed by him.

Convinced by this conduct that he had attached her to his interest, no sooner had he seen the remains of his lady consigned

to the spot where he had been long wishing to see them deposited, than he requested a private audience of Mrs. Munro, in which he briefly revealed the purpose for which he had desired it ; and pledged himself, if she succeeded in the business he wished her to undertake, to make not only a handsome addition to her jointure, but to let her retain possession of the mansion-house during her life, and in every respect treat her as the head of the family.

Pride and selfishness were Mrs. Munro's governing principles ; it cannot, therefore, be supposed she had any hesitation in agreeing to do what promised so amply to gratify both. In the efforts she made for accomplishing the wishes of Sir James, and to which she pretended to her credulous husband, she was merely stimulated by sense of justice and humanity, she quickly succeeded.

In consequence, a letter was on the point of being dispatched to his long discarded and cruelly persecuted son, at the moment his arrived at Glengary.

The answer returned to his application

was dictated by Sir James, and written by Mrs. Munro, her husband having long been under the necessity of employing an amanuensis; and briefly stated that he, Mr. Munro, being disinclined to visit the sins of the father upon the children, had decided upon making his granddaughter his heiress, provided she consented to accept the hand of Sir James Macintosh, (of whose wealth, consequence, and virtues, an exaggerated account was given,) in which case, but on no other condition, his affairs should be arranged, and a proper provision made for himself and his family.

To describe what Elizabeth felt at the perusal of this letter—at finding, as it were the fate of her parents put into her hands, and that without making a sacrifice no less painful in her idea than would have been that of life, there was no hope—no prospect of their being restored to liberty, or any other comfort—would be impossible..

Recoiling from making this sacrifice, yet almost ashamed of doing so, she

sought to avoid the looks of her father, lest she should read reproach and indignation in them, for her hesitation on the subject.

His disposition, however, was too disinterested, to permit him to feel either angry or indignant at this circumstance; nor from his knowledge of the strength of her attachment to Delacour, did he feel any surprise at it. For the first time, however, he wished, but in silence, that this attachment had not existed, since nothing, he almost felt persuaded, from the style of the letter just received, but her compliance with the wishes of her grandfather, could obtain for him any change of circumstances.

He determined, however, not to let despair prevent his making another effort for the purpose; accordingly, as soon as he had dissipated the terrors under which he saw poor Elizabeth trembled, he addressed another letter to his father, stating the engagement between her and Delacour, and conjuring him, in the most energetic terms, not to let her refusing to break a



vow, which honour and generosity alike demanded her keeping, since nothing could be more disinterested—more noble than the conduct of her lover, prevent him from rendering him the assistance he required.

Elizabeth tried to hope this letter would have the wished-for effect ; but if it should not, her heart almost died within her at the idea. How then was she to act ?—“ Relinquish hope—relinquish happiness—relinquish Delacour !” was her response to this self-interrogatory, in the solitude of her chamber, and the hour of darkness and despair—Yes, if nothing but her acquiescence to the proposal of her grandfather could obtain the enlargement of her father, she solemnly vowed to comply with it.

## CHAP. V.

————— "How sinks his soul!

What black despair, what horror fills his heart!"

THOMSON.

MUNRO, too well acquainted with the stubborn nature of his father, to imagine he would give up a measure on which he appeared to have set his heart, and unsuspecting of the resolution Elizabeth had formed, the subject being too painful for her to touch on, could no longer make a struggle against despair. Want already stared him in the face, and the horrors its approach excited were aggravated by the languishing state of Mrs. Munro's health, and his anticipation of what the sufferings

and dangers of Elizabeth would in all probability be, should she, as now appeared likely to be the case, be left an orphan ere the return of Delacour. The gloom of his mind infected his manners, and communicated itself to his countenance; he could no longer force himself to converse, no longer command a smile; the society of his wife and daughter ceased to charm, and in the most retired parts of the ground attached to the prison he now passed those hours he had heretofore passed with his family.

Elizabeth, ignorant of what was really passing in his mind, imputed the sudden alteration in his manners to displeasure, at her having had any hesitation on a point which concerned his happiness and her mother's.

"He accuses me, in all probability," she cried to herself, "of selfishness—deems me unworthy, perhaps, of the tenderness he has so long lavished on me—" the idea almost rived her heart—"But his cruel father, perhaps," she continued; "will furnish me with an opportunity of

proving to him that I am not entirely engrossed by self—Oh, should he,” with all the wildness of despair she added, “at what a price—at what a dreadful price shall I regain his good opinion.”

An answer was returned to Munro's second application the evening after it was sent. Their frugal dinner over, Mrs. Munro had withdrawn to her humble couch, which she was now seldom able to quit for any length of time, and only he and Elizabeth, at the moment of its delivery, were together, seated at a distance, from each other, silent, sorrowful, abstracted.

With something like a feeling of desperation—a feeling which gave a transient animation to his countenance, Munro broke the seal. A glance at the contents sufficed to convince him they were unfavourable, and dropping the letter, he struck his hand on his forehead, and instantly rushed from the room.

As he quitted it, Elizabeth rose from her seat, and with trembling knees (his emotion making her apprehend the worst)

approached the chair he had occupied, and taking up the letter glanced over it. For an instant she remained motionless, the picture of despair, then sinking on her knees—"Oh Delacour!—beloved Delacour!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands together, "must I then give you up?—Is there no way of saving my family, but by my resignation of you?—Alas! I behold none; and in breaking the vow I fondly plighted to you, I plant thorns in my bosom, which must for ever rankle there. Since thus doomed to part, would that we had never met—never met!" she repeated with a burst of anguish, and drawing from her bosom his picture—that picture which had so long been pressed against the heart where his image was enshrined—so often addressed and wept over—"Ah Heavens! how little did he imagine, when he sent me this, the hour would ever arrive in which I should have uttered such a wish!"

Her contemplation of the likeness of her lover did not tend to assuage her anguish; she pressed it involuntarily, and with ago-

nizing tenderness, to her pale and quivering lips—she deluged it with her tears—she held it to her heart, as if she never, never meant again to take it thence, while with a despairing look, her eyes were raised towards Heaven, as if, like the unhappy Juliet, demanding “whether there was no pity sitting in the clouds, that saw into the bottom of her grief?”

Her thoughts at length reverting to her father—to the air of distraction with which he had quitted the room, she hastily arose, and not without bitterly reproaching herself for having so long delayed to follow him, hastened to the solitary haunt he was wont to frequent.

The gloom of twilight had already fallen o’er the scene, and a cold and savage blast howled mournfully through the old and leafless trees that shadowed the spot. She found him pacing the ground, with an air that too evidently proclaimed the dreadful agitation of his mind.

“Oh! my dear father,” she instantly exclaimed, in accents of mingled tender-

ness and melancholy, "what an evening is this for you to be out!—let me conjure you to come in."

Munro, for the first time shrinking from her, on her attempting to take his arm, motioned with his hand for her to leave him.

"Oh! I cannot—cannot!" she cried—"I cannot think of leaving you exposed to such a storm as this."

Again Munro waved his hand for her to quit him—"No," said he, in a tone of sternness and solemnity: "the storm within," and he struck his breast, "renders me insensible to that without; but even if this were not the case, my life is now of too little consequence, too wretched to permit me to be anxious to preserve it—he who looks forward without hope, can scarcely be anxious to avoid death. Like a blasted tree I have withered, no more to revive; and the sooner I drop, the better."

Elizabeth's alarm increased—she looked earnestly in his face—his eye was wild—

his cheek of a sallow paleness—of the brightness of his countenance not a trace remained.

“Oh, should the sacrifice I am about making be made too late to save him!” she internally exclaimed.

Shuddering at the fearful idea, she clung to his arm—“Oh, my father!” she cried, “despair not of yet enjoying happier days—I no longer hesitate to submit to the will of my grandfather, From the moment I understood it, I made up my mind to acquiesce in it, provided his assistance could not be otherways obtained—Oh! could you think,” she added, seeing her father regarding her with a look of mingled incredulity and wonder, “that I could know myself possessed of the power of obtaining your liberty, and yet refuse exercising it?”

Munro no longer doubting her sincerity, clasped her to his heart—“Many daughters have done virtuously,” he exclaimed, as he strained her to his bosom, while tears of tenderness, gratitude, pity, and regret,



gushed from him, and bedewed her pale cheek; "but thou—oh! thou, my Elizabeth, excellest them all, for well I know what it must cost thee to make the sacrifice thou hast promised."

"I—I will not deny," returned Elizabeth, in faltering accents, "that it is a painful one; 'tis due to Delacour, 'tis due to my own character, to acknowledge that I cannot break my engagement to him without a pang. But oh, my father, have you not instructed, have you not taught me to believe, that virtue will still pour balm o'er the wounds inflicted by the sacrifices she demands of us?"

"Yes, assuredly; the sorrows of virtue are still followed by her consolations: but, my Elizabeth, lest you should be tempted to imagine the nature of your father changed, that selfishness has at length gained dominion over him, I protest to you, in the awful sight of Heaven, that nothing but consideration for your mother, nothing short of being convinced she must sink beneath her present sufferings, if not

speedily alleviated, could induce me to permit the sacrifice you have decided on."

He no longer delayed returning to his apartment, which he had no sooner entered, than he sat down to answer the letter from Glengary: with pain—with anguish of heart he wrote it, too well acquainted with the nature of Elizabeth not to know what she must suffer on the present occasion; too sincerely attached to Delacour—the warm-hearted and noble Delacour, not to be agonized by the idea of what he would feel, when he should hear of her broken vow, her violated faith—in short, her resolution far from lessening his wretchedness, only changed the nature of it. Of this Mrs. Munro was now informed, but without any comment on the pain attending on it. Like her husband, however, she had too perfect a knowledge of the disposition of Elizabeth, not to know what her feelings relative to it must be; and as nothing but consideration for her could have induced him to acquiesce in it, so nothing but a conviction, that a much

longer continuance in prison would prove fatal to him, could have allowed her to permit it.

Munro's letter to Glengary brought the transported Sir James to D—— the next morning, with a letter from the old gentleman, enclosing a bank note of fifty pounds, but stating, that in consequence of the evidently reluctant acquiescence, his proposal of uniting her to the baronet had met with, he had decided on not liberating him, till the marriage of Elizabeth had taken place.

The base, the ungenerous distrust this letter manifested his father harbouring of him, roused all that was fiery and indignant in the nature of Munro. The presence of Sir James, however, made him quickly endeavour to subdue the emotion it excited.

After expatiating some time on the pain he felt at the idea of his having suffered so much, and the happiness he should derive from endeavouring to prove himself worthy of his future confidence and friendship, Sir James requested to be indulged

with an interview with his fair mistress, who, on the announcement of his name, had precipitately, with her mother, left the room.

Since matters had proceeded thus far, Munro, conceiving it but right that he should be gratified, repaired to Elizabeth. He found her in a state of the most painful agitation; but though every feeling revolted at the idea of seeing Sir James, of listening to a declaration which never—never, she felt persuaded, could again be pleasing to her ear, she refused not complying with his request, but let her father lead her to the room, since, like him, she could not avoid acknowledging, that, as she had consented to accept the addresses of Sir James, propriety demanded her acting so as to conceal her repugnancy to them; but notwithstanding this, involuntarily, and with averted eyes, she shrunk back, on his attempting to take her hand from her father. He persisted, however, and leading her to a seat, spite of her too evident distress, with a cheek flushed with rapture, for Sir James was incapable of

feeling for any mortal but himself, thanked her, in the most high-flown terms, for consenting to render him the most enviable of men, and assured her the study of his life should be to evince his gratitude.

Elizabeth tried to listen to him with composure ; but when he ventured to press for an early day, and artfully represented the necessity there was for it, by mentioning her grandfather's determination relative to her father, and which he pretended he had vainly attempted to alter, she could no longer controul her feelings. Snatching away her hand, she started up, and flew from the room, in an agony too great for description. But scarcely had she left it, ere tenderness for her parents induced her to return, and falter out an apology for having quitted it so abruptly.

Sir James, whatever might be the displeasure he felt, and that he felt some was probable, as he was both a vain and an irritable man, at an emotion which augured his being more than indifferent to her, let nothing be seen in his looks and manner but smiles and softness ; he again led her

to a seat, expressed the deepest regret for the sudden indisposition to which he affected, to impute her recent conduct, and finally by degrees revived the subject which had been thus interrupted; and had, at length, the supreme felicity of receiving a promise from her to become his in the course of a few days, but accompanied by a request to be excused seeing him again, till the one appointed for their marriage—a request which, after her ready acquiescence to his wishes, Sir James could not avoid complying with.

The disgust which Elizabeth felt at the flaming declarations of Sir James, united to her wish for an uninterrupted opportunity of endeavouring to reason herself into composure, and reconcile herself in some degree to a fate that now seemed inevitable, was her motive for this request.

But in vain did she endeavour to reason with herself—the nearer the hour approached, in which to dwell longer on the idea of Delacour, that idea which she had so long, so fondly cherished, would be criminal, the more wretched she became.

No tear, no sigh, however, betrayed to her parents what she suffered ; nor was a tear, a sigh, requisite to do so ; her countenance was the faithful index of her heart, and with unutterable anguish, from its sad expression, they perceived that at the shrine of filial duty she was about sacrificing every hope of earthly happiness.

Munro's anguish was rendered still more poignant than his wife's, by the observations which he had opportunities of making on Sir James, and which inclined him to believe he was one of those selfish characters, who make their own gratification their first, if not sole consideration, and with whom, of course, it was not to be imagined a person of so very opposite a nature as was Elizabeth, could ever enjoy felicity.

Still, however, notwithstanding this surmise, the situation of her mother withheld him from desiring to see her recede from her newly-formed engagement ; and there were moments in which he tried to sooth his agonized mind, by indulging a hope that her gentle virtues, her unaffected

sanctity, and sweetness of disposition, would have too powerful an effect upon Sir James, not to permit the fulfilment of this engagement to obtain her some degree of happiness.

Such was the substance of the story which Stubbs, in his plain, though prolix manner related to the deeply-interested and agonized Osmond. We shall not dwell on the frequent interruptions it received from him, neither the alternate bursts of passion and of sorrow it excited ; suffice, that on its conclusion, he might with truth have said—

“There’s not a wretch that lives on common charity,  
But’s happier far than me.”

In vain did Stubbs, who, as he proceeded in his narrative, had gradually raised himself in his estimation, by the part which, notwithstanding his unostentatious spirit, he could not avoid acknowledging he had taken in the concerns of his family, endeavour to assuage his anguish, and prevail on him to partake of the frugal fare




set before him. His artless eloquence was unavailing, and, at length, silenced by Osmond's telling him, after he had gratefully thanked him for his attention, that the greatest kindness he could at present confer on him, would be to let him take possession of the chamber he had so hospitably offered him.

The principal part of the night, for he neither thought of undressing or reposing, was passed, by Osmond, in pacing the narrow limits of his chamber, mourning over the misery of his family.

"Unhappy parents," he repeatedly exclaimed, "what must you not suffer at beholding the wretchedness of your daughter! and you, my dear, dear sister, would to Heaven, by the sacrifice of myself, I could save you from that you are about making!"

Was there no way, he considered, by which this sacrifice might be prevented? might not an appeal to the honour, the sensibility of Sir James, or a representation in person on the subject to his grandfather, avert it?



“But no, no,” with all the wildness of despair, he replied to himself, “Sir James has not feelings that can be moved by an appeal of the kind, or he never could have acted as he has done; nor the obdurate parent of my father, a particle of humanity in his disposition, or he never would have taken advantage of the distress of his son, to doom his child to misery!”

But the contemplation of this misery was not his only source of anguish at present; the idea of what he was thoroughly convinced Delacour would suffer, at losing Elizabeth, scarcely less tortured him.

“Oh why, why,” in agony he exclaimed, “must a love like theirs be rent asunder! Oh, Delacour, dear and inestimable friend, must the cup of sorrow be administered to thee by friends, to whom thy happiness is so precious!”

At the first dawn of day he quitted his chamber, impatient to set out for D——. Stubbs, however, could not immediately attend him thither; he was, therefore, forced to curb his impatience, as, without his return being cautiously announced to

his family, he could not think of appearing before them, lest, in the present agitated state of their feelings, seeing him abruptly might be attended with injurious consequences; especially as he knew there was nothing they less expected at this moment, owing to their having, Stubbs informed him, received the letter he wrote from Naples, stating his being to all appearance settled there for life, and expressing his hope of their shortly joining him in that kingdom.

To while away the tedious moments he was obliged to wait for the farmer, or rather avoid that observation so irksome to the suffering heart, he strolled into the garden, and from thence to a wild and savage part of the heath, where, at this early hour, every thing looked cold, bleak, and dismal. The summits of the immense mountains, viewed from hence, rugged with rocks, and patched with a rank and mournful grass, and appearing from the undulating horizon they formed, as if, (to make use of the words of a modern writer, in speaking of similar ones) "impelled

and driven onward in immense waves and broken swells," were yet veiled in heavy clouds, while the mists and exhalations of morning returned in streaming showers upon the vallies that intersected them, heightening their dreariness almost to horror.

The sympathetic gloom of every object was, however, infinitely more consonant to the present feelings of Osmond, than a livelier scene would have been ; and he accordingly continued wandering about, gazing on the well-remembered haunts of his childhood, with a sensation of mingled bitterness and pleasure, till Stubbs came in quest of him, to inform him he was ready to attend him to D——.


Midway between it and Heathwood they met a chaise and four, driving rapidly towards the latter place, from which, as it passed, Osmond was much surprised at hearing himself called. He stopped ; the chaise did so at the same moment, and, with sensations impossible to be described, he beheld Delacour.

" Good Heavens ! do my senses deceive

me!" cried Delacour, bursting open the door, and springing out, "or have I really the happiness of seeing you—still seeing you in the land of the living! Oh, my dear, dear fellow," shaking Osmond by the hand, with all the cordiality of friendship, "what have I not suffered on your account! The idea of your dismal fate made me dread, as much as long, to behold your family: but no more, at least at present, of past sorrows—this blessed moment more than compensates for all. Come, you must turn back with me; and as we proceed to Heathwood, gratify the anxiety I feel, to know by what miracle, for to nothing less can I think your preservation owing, you escaped the merciless waves that swallowed up the frigate you were in."

"You shall hear all, my dear friend," returned Osmond; but you must order the chaise to turn, for—for," involuntarily hesitating, "my family have left Heathwood."

"Left Heathwood!" echoed Delacour, in an accent indicative of the greatest sur-



prise; "what that dear little snug retreat your father was so fond of! but I trust they have not removed to any great distance from it."

"No, not a great way," replied Osmond, with forced composure; "but order the carriage to turn and take us to the inn at D——."

Then drawing Stubbs aside, he, in a low voice, requested him to hasten to his father, cautiously break his return, and inform him, but without touching on the incident that had just taken place, that he would shortly be with him.

"Good God!" exclaimed the warm-hearted Delacour, with a burst of grateful joy, on Osmond's taking a seat beside him, "how little did I imagine, at the commencement of this day, such happiness was in store for me, as I now enjoy, from seeing you again in health and safety!—Yet great as it is," he added, after a transient pause and with a half sigh, "it is not perfect. The idea of returning to your sister, only rich in love,

prevents its being so. The hopes with which I quitted England have been disappointed. Instead of making the prosperous voyage I expected, ere I had completed it, the ship I commanded, in consequence of the injuries it sustained in an engagement with two larger vessels of the enemy, which we had the satisfaction, however, of thinking we revenged in a manner that must prevent their shortly making another, foundered; and my brave companions and I must have gone to the bottom, but for a frigate bound for England, that suddenly hove in sight, the fleet with which we set sail from Portsmouth being dispersed by heavy gales. My ship, as you may perceive," glancing with half a smile at his arm, which Osmond, now for the first time, perceived in a sling, "was not all that suffered in the battle with the Monsieurs."

All hope of Delacour's being able to prevent the sacrifice of his sister, destroyed by this statement, Osmond felt himself more wretched than ever, so painful to his

feelings was the idea of the task, which he saw had devolved to him, of acquainting him with the loss of Elizabeth.

After a little deliberation, he resolved on being silent on the subject. till they had reached the inn, and then, on practising a little deception on Delacour, by informing him Elizabeth was already married, lest otherwise he should attempt to obtain an interview with her, and thus augment the wretchedness of all parties.

“Is there an absolute necessity for our stopping at D——?” asked Delacour suddenly and with an anxious look.

Oppressed by the most agonizing sensations, Osmond, with difficulty articulated —“Yes.”

“And why?” demanded Delacour, still more earnestly and anxiously.

“You shall—hear,” with involuntary hesitation, returned Osmond, “as soon as we get to the inn.”

“To the inn!” repeated the impetuous Delacour. “Dear Osmond,” suddenly grasping his arm, and looking in his face, “you alarm me—your manner is con-



strained — your looks are embarrassed — more distress is legible on every feature? if any evil awaits me, let me at once know it, for the tortures of suspense are not endurable.”

“I conjure you to suspend for the present all further inquiries on the subject,” cried Osmond, in the most supplicating accent, unwilling, from the agitation he was in, to commence yet awhile the story he had to relate.

“Impossible—impossible! you might as well bid the wild waves be still, as bid me cease my inquiries till answered.”

“See, D—— appears in sight,” cried Osmond; “a few minutes more, and you shall be gratified, my dear Delacour.”

“Well, now I trust,” said Delacour, on their entering an apartment, shutting the door, and turning towards Osmond as he spoke, “you will no longer hesitate releasing me from the rack on which you have placed me.”

“Heaven can attest how unwillingly,” returned Osmond, in accents of mingled solemnity and tenderness. “Oh Delacour,

believe me I cannot give a pang to your heart, without inflicting a still severer one on my own. Many—many are the painful hours I have experienced, since we last parted ; but this outdoes them all in bitterness, since it reduces me to the necessity of wounding the feelings of him, whom, as a brother, my soul loves. Elizabeth——”

“ Drive me not to madness by pausing !” exclaimed Delacour, the flush which impatience had given to his manly cheek yielding to a deathlike paleness, and his lips quivering through emotion. “ Elizabeth ! what—what of her ?”

“ Is——”

“ Dead !” interrupted Delacour, “ in a tone of horror, and evidently holding by a chair to prevent himself from sinking to the floor.

“ To you,” returned Osmond, after the silence of a minute, and in a solemn and emphatic accent.

“ Ha !” exclaimed Delacour, starting, and with an emotion that again crimsoned

his cheek ; “ what say you ? ” approaching Osmond ; “ Elizabeth not dead, but to me !—do you mean to insinuate that she is faithless—do you wish me to understand that she is——”

“ Married,” cried Osmond, with difficulty, and instantly turning from his gaze.

“ Married — Elizabeth married ! ” repeated Delacour, after a silence of some minutes—a silence, which more forcibly than language could have done, proclaimed the shock the intelligence had given him. —“ But,” after another pause, “ what a fool am I to be so surprised at the news ! for what attractions can I pretend to, that I should be astonished at not being able to fix the wavering affections of a volatile woman ? You will oblige me,” he added, but with evident difficulty, and in a tone of mingled irony and bitterness, “ by letting me know who my happy successor in her favour is ? ”

Osmond, but with reluctance, informed him.

“ A baronet ! ” resumed Delacour ;

well, my pride at least should be gratified by her not having sacrificed me to a meaner rival."

"Oh Delacour," cried Osmond, turning with quickness towards him, eager, from laudable pride, to vindicate his sister, of the selfishness, inconstancy, and vanity, which it was now evident Delacour imputed to her, "could you look into her heart, you would find——"

He paused—paused, owing to his suddenly reflecting on the cruelty he should be guilty of, in trying to justify Elizabeth in the opinion of her lover, since no doubt could be entertained, that, in proportion to his esteem for her, would be his regret for her loss.

"Well," resumed Delacour, after evidently waiting a few minutes for him to finish the sentence, "could I look into her heart, what should I find there?—art, affectation, and vanity."

"Let us wave the subject," cried Osmond, greatly agitated; 'tis a most unpleasant one."

"Truly so," returned Delacour, "as

would, indeed, any other at the present moment, for I feel much fatigued ; as I cannot, therefore," pulling the bell as he spoke, "any longer enjoy your company, I request you may not, on my account, delay rejoining your no doubt happy family."

"My happy family!" almost groaned Osmond ; "Oh Delacour——."

A waiter appearing, Delacour desired to be shewn to another room.

"Delacour, stop, for an instant, I implore you," cried Osmond, alarmed by the wildness of his looks, and agonized at the idea of his shutting himself up to brood over his disappointment ; "surely," catching him by the arm, as he was quitting the apartment, "you do not mean to let us part in such a manner—you do not intend to let what has happened interrupt our friendship?"

"For ever," returned Delacour, with a look of fierceness, and in a corresponding tone. "Of your truth, your sincerity, I entertained not a higher opinion than I did of your sister's, and yet she has de-

ceived—cruelly deceived me ; I will not, therefore, put it in the power of another of the family to do so. From this period I trust the name of Munro will remain a stranger to my ear.”

“Time often conquers strong prejudices,” said Osmond ; “I will not, therefore, despair of your yet being convinced, that among your friends you do not rank more sincere ones than are those who bear it.”

“Perhaps so ; but till that time arrives, I trust we shall never meet.”

“Greatly as my feelings are hurt by your treatment,” cried Osmond, “yet I cannot—cannot bring myself to join in that wish.”

Delacour, without replying, made another effort to withdraw his arm from the grasp of Osmond, but which a sudden faintness that came over him rendered unavailing, Osmond perceiving him change colour and stagger, hastily supported him to a couch.

“For Heaven’s sake, my dear fellow,”

he eagerly demanded, "what is the matter?"

Delacour, without speaking, glanced at his wounded arm, and with a sensation of horror, Osmond beheld the scarf which supported it deluged in blood, occasioned by the bursting open of his wound, in consequence of the agitation he had experienced.

Osmond was hastening to procure him assistance, when he stopped him, to desire he would only ring for his servant, whose attendance, he added, was all that was requisite.

Osmond obeyed. As soon as the arm of Delacour was bound up, and a glass of wine administered to him by the hand of Osmond, whose attentions appeared to have an effect upon him, he with difficulty avoided acknowledging, he again moved towards the door, for the purpose of quitting the room.

"Delacour, ere you retire, will you not tell me whether I may not hope to see you again?" said Osmond, following him.

"I mean to quit this place almost immediately," replied Delacour.

"Indeed! then 'tis probable we shall not meet again, at least for a long, long period. Well—but," with a deep sigh, "'tis our lot to suffer in this life—" then almost involuntarily tendering his hand, "Delacour, will you not bid me farewell?"

"Oh, Osmond!" grasping his offered hand, "why this?—You add to the pain I already labour under, by thus persisting to be kind—if you regard me let us part now."

"Adieu then!" cried Osmond—"May Heaven bless you, and health and happiness be your's!"

"'Tis a good wish," said Delacour, evidently struggling with his feelings, "and I will echo it. Osmond, notwithstanding what has happened—what I have said, trust me, I shall ever rejoice at hearing of your welfare; and not only your's, but—(for I am not vindictive) of her's who——" He paused for an instant in evident agony, and then proceeded—"Yes,



though she has blasted my hopes of happiness, may her's never perish—may she never, never experience a pang similar to that she has made me feel! Osmond, farewell! if we can ever meet again without pain, I shall not regret the circumstance;” then dropping his hand he quitted the room.

“ Oh, never,” sighed Osmond to himself, as Delacour withdrew, “ will that period, I fear, arrive; we have, therefore, in all probability, now met for the last time. Oh, Delacour! inestimable friend! thou, whom with truth I may say, I have worn in my heart's core—aye, in my heart of hearts, what can console me for the loss of thy society—thy friendship!”

As soon as the violence of his emotions had a little subsided, he left the apartment, for the purpose of repairing to the prison of his father. In the hall he encountered Mactalla.

“ Ah, signor,” exclaimed he, in his usual manner, “ or sir, as in future I shall style you, since we are now on British ground, I am glad I have met you, for

there is the real signor, Signor Barbarino, fretting and foaming to see you."

"It is not in my power to wait on him at present; I therefore desire he may not know of my being here."

Mactalla looked earnestly at his master for a minute without speaking, then suddenly turning on his heel, he darted to a door at the side of the hall, and throwing it open—"Signor Barbarino—Signor Barbarino!" he exclaimed, to the utter amazement as well as displeasure of Osmond, who had never before known him to act in any other than the most submissive manner, "here is my master."

Osmond, in a frame of mind that could not permit him to brook trifling, was unable to suppress the anger and indignation this direct disobedience to his orders excited.

"How dare you sir," cried he, darting a furious glance at Mactalla, "act in such a manner?"

"Nay, pray don't chide him," said Signor Barbarino, who on Osmond's being announced, had approached the door, and

now laid his hand on his arm ; “ what he has done has been in compliance with my wishes ; let him not, therefore, suffer for his good-natured anxiety to oblige me.”

“ If it was in my power, sir,” cried Osmond, but still in a ruffled voice, “ to devote any time to you at present, I should not be angry with him for the manner in which he has acted ; but I am at this juncture so particularly engaged, that it is not possible for me to do so.”

“ I am sorry to hear that,” returned Signor Barbarino, “ for I hoped to have had your company this day at least ; but indulge me with a few minutes conversation.”

Osmond reluctantly consented, and entering the parlour, the old gentleman closed the door.

“ I have already been so fortunate,” continued he, “ as to discover the friends I came here in quest of ; and not having forgot to mention you in the course of the conversation I have had with them, relative to recent events, their anxiety for an introduction to you is so great, that I

shall feel myself much mortified if not able to gratify them, by prevailing on you to spend the day with us."

"For the favourable report which has given birth to the anxiety you speak of, accept my acknowledgments, sir," said Osmond; "but undeserving should I be of your favourable sentiments, (as I am confident you would yourself confess, did you know how I am situated at this moment,) were I to comply with your present wishes."

"Why, you are not in any trouble, I hope?" demanded the old gentleman, fixing his still penetrating eyes on the countenance of Osmond.

Osmond involuntarily shook his head.

"Am I to understand," rejoined Signor Barbarino, "that you have been disappointed with regard to the situation in which you expected to find your family?"

Again a melancholy shake of the head was Osmond's only reply.

"Ah! I perceive you have," resumed Signor Barbarino—"Trust me, I sincerely sympathise with you; but——" and he

paused for a moment, "yielding to dejection can do no good; therefore, let me conjure you, my dear young friend; to exert yourself, be the trial you have just met with what it may, since fortitude under affliction is not only a proof of resignation to the will of the Supreme, (without whose divine permission no evil, we are taught to believe can befall us,) but also one of the best we can give of understanding; it being a superlative folly, every one must allow, to complain of what is inevitable; for, as the sparks fly upward, so is man, sooner or later, destined to suffer."

Osmond made no reply to this speech, or as he considered it at the moment, common-place harangue; but whilst listening to it, the following beautiful lines of Shakespeare recurred to his recollection:—

"'Tis all men's office to speak patience  
To those that wring under the load of sorrow;  
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency  
To be so moral, when he shall endure  
The like himself."

"I hope I shall be able to profit by your



counsel, sir," said he on the old gentleman's pausing—"And now," making, as he spoke, a movement towards the door, "I must bid you adieu for the present."

"Well, if you must go, you must," cried Signor Barbarino; "but not that way, if you please," beckoning him from the door towards which he had gone, to another on the opposite side of the room, and which, as he spoke, he flung open. Osmond involuntarily glanced within the apartment thus revealed to his view; but scarcely had he done so, ere he started back in unutterable amazement, with almost a doubt of his being awake—almost a belief of his eyes having deceived him—a belief that perhaps the reader will not be surprised at his being inclined to yield to, when informed that they rested on his parents and his sister.

After a short and affecting pause—affecting, from the feelings to which it was owing, and during which, with truth it might be said,

"Forth at his eyes his spirits wildly peep'd—"

“Am I really awake?” he demanded, “or do my senses deceive me?”

“Oh, my son!” now burst from the labouring bosom of Munro as he advanced from the arm of the sofa, against which he had been leaning, and on which his wife and daughter, trembling with agitation, were seated.

Osmond heard no more—He rushed forward into the extended arms of his father—He passed from them into his mother’s and sister’s.

“Oh, moment of ecstasy!” cried Munro, as he beheld their mingling tears of joy, his own dropping at the sight, and his still fine countenance beaming with the gratitude with which his heart was filled to Heaven—“Oh, moments of ecstasy!” he repeated on beholding his son improved in every grace, in figure, in feature, in manly beauty, what he already knew he was in disposition and accomplishments, namely, all that the fondest, proudest father could desire, “how amply do ye recompence me for past sufferings!”

“But tell me, tell me,” said Osmond,

in the scarce audible voice of strong emotion, and suddenly disengaging himself from the embraces of his mother and sister, "tell me," glancing from his father at Signor Barbarino, "how—by what means did that most benevolent of men, for to him I clearly perceive we are indebted for our present happiness, learn your situation, or become interested in it?"

"Ask nature," replied Signor Barbarino, in an emphatic voice, and laying his hand on his bosom, while tears rolled down his furrowed cheeks.

"Nature!" repeated Osmond, with increasing emotion, and again a wildness in his looks, which were now entirely bent on the old gentleman—"Are you then connected with us?"

"By the title of father," returned Signor Barbarino, approaching Mrs. Munro, and falling on her neck—"In your long suffering mother you behold my daughter, my only and beloved, though long discarded child—in your family, the friends whom I came hither to seek, the friends, the relatives with whom I hope to pass the



remnant of my days. My sorrowing and repentant spirit has already been soothed by their kindness and forgiveness; and could I hope that the prejudice which past transactions must have inspired you with against me would not be lasting, I should again feel happy, in consequence of their conduct."

"He must have a malignant disposition indeed," cried Osmand, with all his wonted animation, "whom repentance and atonement cannot soften—The forgiving parent of my mother, the friend—the liberator of my father, is entitled to my warmest gratitude, my tenderest affection. Either my feelings must greatly alter, or I do not know myself aright, if one of the most delightful studies of my life, will not be to evince, by actions, what I owe him.

"Oh! thou," cried Signor Barbarino, or as we shall in future style him, Don Alphonso de Xeres, (his real name,) his eyes uplifted towards Heaven, "who by permitting me to enjoy this happiness, hast given me to hope my repentance is accepted by thee, for ever bless and pros-

per this youth !” Then turning towards Osmond — “ By actions also,” he continued, “ will I endeavour to prove the sincerity of my regard for you—Henceforward——”


“ Oh, my dear sir,” interrupted Osmond impatiently, and grasping his hand, “ in rescuing those I love from misery—in giving me the power,” his thoughts suddenly reverting to Delacour, “ of saving the noblest heart that Heaven ever enshrined within a human breast, from breaking, you have already done for me all that I can wish. Oh, Delacour !—beloved Delacour !” in a transport of joy he exclaimed, “ is it then given me to heal the wound, I agonized myself by inflicting on you !”

## CHAP. VI.

"Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history."

SHAKSPEARE.

WHILST Osmond was answering the eager inquiries which his declaration relative to Delacour excited, himself restless, wretched, and impatient, ordered a chaise to be got ready to take him from D——. Some time elapsed ere this order was obeyed, and just as he was on the point of stepping into it, an old gentleman advanced from the inn, and entreated to be favoured with a vacant seat, having, he said, vainly tried throughout the neighbourhood to procure another for himself, and being under an indispensable engagement to set out for London immediately.



In the present state of his mind, Delacour could ill brook the thoughts of a companion ; he therefore hesitated a few minutes ere he replied to this entreaty, when the natural benevolence of his disposition getting the better of him, he assented.

More, however, he could not prevail on himself to do. As the carriage rolled off he informed the stranger he must excuse his not entering into conversation, being too indisposed at the moment to be equal to any exertion ; then closing his eyes, he leant back in a corner of it, and resigned himself to the agonizing reflections then prevailing in his mind.

Absorbed in these, he neither remarked the length of way they travelled without stopping, nor the gradual approach of night, till roused from his reverie, by being asked by the stranger whether he would not alight ; upon which, starting as if from a dream, he looked about him, and found the chaise before a house, which a faint ray of light streaming from a window rendered just visible.

“This is the stage at which we are to put up for the night,” said the old gentleman; “we have had a long sitting, and ’tis time now that we should have some refreshment.”

Delacour, without making any reply to this observation, mechanically alighted, and followed him into the house. They were ushered into a neat parlour, well lighted, and where a cheerful fire sent forth an animating blaze.

“This is comfortable indeed,” cried the old gentleman, rubbing his hands with an air that proclaimed his really thinking so.

“All we now want is a good supper—pray, sir, may I ask what you would like to have?”

“You would oblige me, sir,” returned Delacour, somewhat impatiently, “by not consulting me on the subject; order what you please, and trust me I shall be satisfied.”

“Well, sir, I shall do as you wish,” slightly bowing, and ringing the bell.

Delacour, pacing the room with disordered steps, and folded arms, heeded

not who obeyed this summons, till again addressed by the old gentleman.

“For a minute, sir,” said he, “may I request your attention.”

Angry at being, as he conceived, teased, Delacour paused, and was on the point of saying he must excuse his sitting down to supper with him, when the faculty of speech was for an instant suspended, by the object that met his gaze as he turned towards him.

Elizabeth, pale, trembling, and evidently agitated to a degree that rendered her scarcely able to support herself, stood leaning against the side of the fireplace.

“Gracious Heaven!” at length he exclaimed, but still regarding her with wildness, “do not my senses deceive me! do I see aright, or has my imagination, disordered by trouble, raised up this vision, to add to my tortures!”

Elizabeth, with a faint smile, but without speaking, extended her hand to him, and the old gentleman instantly vanished from the room.

Instead of accepting her proffered hand,

however, Delacour involuntarily retreated a few paces further from her.

“Elizabeth,” he cried, after regarding her for another minute in silence, and with still greater wildness, “explain the meaning of all this! Why, why do I see you here?—why with that countenance, after what has happened? Surely it is not possible you could wish to witness the anguish you have inflicted?”

“Oh, Delacour!” now burst from the quivering lips of Elizabeth; then after a momentary pause, “you will soon be convinced that I merit no reproaches from you—no doubt of my tenderness: yes, when you learn that the hand you once thought worth your acceptance, is still at my own disposal.”

“Not married!” interrupted Delacour, eagerly approaching her, then again involuntarily recoiling with a look of incredulity—“Oh, Elizabeth! after what I heard——”

“I am still, notwithstanding, your’s,” she returned, with quickness, the paleness of her cheek giving place to a glowing

blush—"That—that is——" hesitating a little, and with something like a smile of archness, "provided I have no reason to believe you do not wish me to be so."

"Wish!" repeated Delacour with vehemence, and no longer attempting to resist the impulse of his feelings—"Wish!" snatching her to his heart, and straining her to it some minutes in silence—"Let this transport tell you what I wish. But am I indeed to believe my present happiness real?—am I indeed to believe you single, and still inclined to render me the most blest of men? Nay, dearest Elizabeth," observing her countenance lower a little at these words, "pardon me. Only reflect on the sudden transition I have experienced from despair to hope, and you will not—cannot, I am certain, wonder that I should doubt the reality of the change.—How, how, if it be real, can I reconcile to myself the conduct of your brother—the cruel—the agonizing deception he practised on me?"

"He is at hand to account for that him-



not hear without acknowledging that his conduct towards him had been the very reverse of unkind.

“And will Don Alphonso, indeed,” cried Delacour, in an anxious tone, and with an emotion that recalled to his cheek the colour which illness and suffering had banished from it, “will he indeed be generous enough to wave the pretensions he has so just a right to form for my Elizabeth, in favour of a person who has so little of this world’s goods to endow her with?”

“Oh, what a question!” cried Osmond. “Where would be his honour, his justice, his generosity, if he hesitated for an instant fulfilling her father’s promise of giving her to you—you who so disinterestedly selected her for your bride, when there was but little prospect of fortune ever smiling on her. Oh, Delacour! trust me, Don Alphonso—but his actions will better speak for him than I can. Let the knowledge of his having been your companion hither, and this being Heathwood, dissipate all your doubts, if indeed you have

any on the subject. In pursuance of his wishes to carry into effect a little plot he contrived as soon as he learnt you were at D——, for the purpose of heightening your surprise, I resisted my own to terminate immediately your unhappiness.”

“Don Alphonso my companion from D——,” cried Delacour, in accents indicative of the greatest surprise, “and this Heathwood!” then after the pause of a minute—“Well, I acknowledge,” with all his wonted animation, “my happiness is more perfect for having been a little delayed.”

Munro, his wife, and Don Alphonso, now entered; the scene that ensued may easier be conceived than described—suffice it to say, that on the transported Delacour’s turning to the latter, after having paid his compliments to the two former, the old gentleman taking him by the hand and affectionately pressing it—“Your presence,” said he, “was all that was wanting to render complete the happiness of this day. A few hours ago, and I imagined I could not think more highly of the sacri-

fice my granddaughter intended making for her parents than I then did ; but since I have seen you, I won't say," smiling a little archly, " conversed with you, I find her merit in agreeing to that sacrifice was even greater than I at first thought."

Delacour attempted but in vain to make a suitable reply to this speech, so full was his heart at the moment ; his looks, however, were eloquently expressive of what he felt.

As soon as composure was in some degree restored to the party, they adjourned to another room, where an elegant supper was laid out for them. On the cloth being removed, and the servants withdrawn, a general explanation took place.

After having for a considerable period, but in vain, endeavoured to derive happiness from the gratification of his vanity, and stifle, in the hurry of dissipation, the voice of nature and of conscience, which incessantly reproached him for his conduct to his daughter—a daughter who never but in one instance had given him the smallest cause for displeasure, a lingering

fit of illness brought him, Don Alphonso proceeded to inform his attentive auditors, to a proper way of thinking.

“It was then,” he continued, “when stretched as I imagined upon a death-bed, that reflection regained its wonted empire over me, and in the bitterness of the remorse it excited, I vowed to make all the atonement in my power for my past conduct.

“This vow, as soon as I recovered, would have occasioned me to set out for this kingdom ; but that a very considerable part of my property was vested in the hands of a person in Naples.”

He then entered into a minute detail of the adventure that brought him and Osmond acquainted, and of the manner in which he had discovered his being his grandson.

“Nothing but a fear of the knowledge,” proceeded Don Alphonso, “of our connexion causing such a restraint in his manner, as might prevent my ascertaining whether or not his disposition was what appearances proclaimed it to be, and

which I was most anxious for doing, withheld me from discovering myself to him, on learning who he was.

“My solicitude on this head satisfied, he should then have known our affinity ; but that, like a whimsical old man, perhaps you will say, I became desirous of heightening, as much as possible, the surprise I was aware the communication of it would give him, and accordingly decided on delaying it till my arrival here ; but with difficulty did I persevere in this resolution—with difficulty forbear falling on his neck, and calling him my son, when, as was often the case, in the course of conversation, he mentioned his parents, and by half-uttered sentences gave me too clearly to understand the anxiety with which his heart was racked about them.

“The agitation which I experienced on alighting at this place, in consequence of knowing I was then in the vicinity of those whom I so longed, yet dreaded, to see, from the prejudice, I naturally supposed they entertained against me, was so violent, as to induce me to determine on

postponing the discovery I had to make till this morning, when I trusted I should be sufficiently composed to set about it in the manner I wished ; and accordingly, therefore, suffered the companion of my journey, to leave me, without giving him a hint of the secret with which my bosom laboured.

“ Just as I was on the point of rising this morning, his merry valet (but with a countenance at the moment that gave him no right to the appellation) entered my chamber. Hastily, and with alarm, I inquired what had happened to make him look so pale and melancholy ; and he in reply very briefly informed me, that he had just learnt from a person in the inn, with whom he had entered into conversation about the family of his master, of your being,” glancing at Munro, “ in confinement at D—— for debt.

“ I will not,” continued Don Alphonso, “ dwell on the scene that followed this information ; suffice it to say, that I lost no time in discovering myself to the honest and warm-hearted Mactalla, and set-

ting about the enlargement of those he was so interested about."

In reply to Osmond's inquiry, as to the manner in which this was accounted for to them, Don Alphonso said that he had sent a letter to his father, merely stating that his release was effected by the interposition of an old Spanish friend of Mrs. Munro's, who was then impatiently waiting at the inn to embrace her and her family.

"On the scene that here again took place when we met, I shall no more dwell," cried Don Alphonso, "than I did on the one that preceded it. From your own feelings," and he looked alternately, and with almost equal affection at Osmond and Delacour, "ye can well, I am convinced, picture to yourselves what that must have been, which took place between a penitent father and a forgiving daughter—a long separated parent and child. Oh, at the moment in which my enfeebled arms again enfolded her—in which I again strained her to the heart from which I had so long strove to banish her, I felt compensated for years of suffering; yet at the

same time convinced that I merited not only these, but years of suffering to comfort having for such a period remained inexorable to the voice of nature: but the Almighty is more merciful to man, than man is often to his kindred being—in his sight the tear of repentance drops not in vain, nor is the sighing of the contrite heart disregarded.

“At the very moment in which you made your appearance,” resumed Don Alphonso, after a short pause, addressing his grandson, “we were on the point of dispatching a messenger to Heathwood in quest of you, some little alarm being excited in our minds by your delay in joining us.”

As soon as the emotions awakened by the above narrative were a little calmed, Osmond gave a brief account of all that had occurred in his recent visit to the scenes of his youth; and Delacour then satisfied the curiosity of his friends, by acquainting them with the circumstance that occasioned his returning home so much sooner than was expected.

Munro also stated, that for being able



to accommodate them so immediately at Heathwood, he was indebted to Farmer Stubbs, who, as soon as the transports he experienced at the happy revolution in his affairs had a little subsided, busied himself to get it in order for their reception.

The period fixed for the nuptials of Elizabeth with Sir James, was yet four days off, and till its arrival it was decided, though not without some deliberation, and many arguments *pro* and *con*, that in order to render still more severe his merited disappointment, and that of his base coadjutor, no intelligence of what had passed should be dispatched to Glengary from which, owing to the request of Elizabeth, they did not till then expect to see any one.

“But since the wedding-day of my granddaughter has been fixed,” said Don Alphonso, with an air of liveliness that proclaimed the restoration of his happiness, “I am determined she shall not be disappointed of being a bride at the expected time—that is, provided Captain Delacour has no objection to becoming the substi-

tute of Sir James on this occasion, nor she to permitting him."

"I see, sir," cried the animated Delacour, with a look of grateful transport, "you are determined on adding to the obligations I already owe you."

"Well, I perceive you have no objection to my proposal," resumed Don Alphonso—"Miss Munro," turning still more jocosely to his granddaughter, "it now rests with you to say, whether or not it shall be carried into effect."

Elizabeth blushed and bent her eyes.

"Silent!" rejoined her grandfather—"Well, Captain Delacour, I have heard it said, that when ladies are so, without regard to certain questions, there is no cause for despair."

"I trust not, in the present instance, sir," cried Delacour, "since I candidly confess, after being so near losing my Elizabeth, I shall not be able to divest myself of doubts and apprehensions, till I know she is positively mine; still, notwithstanding this, I know not, invalid as I am," and he glanced at his wounded arm, "how to——"

"Plead your own cause," interrupted Osmond.

"Exactly so," said Delacour, "and therefore must entreat——"

"Others to do so for you, since too modest a fellow," smiling a little ironically, "to be able to do so yourself."

"Well, I am much mistaken," said Munro, directing his looks to Delacour, "if the very circumstance that causes you to hesitate in urging your wishes, is not one more likely than any other to obtain their accomplishment—I do not know Elizabeth, if she does not prefer acquiring the privilege of watching over the health of her lover, to the indulgence of those punctilios dictated by maiden coyness."

"You transport me by the supposition, sir," cried Delacour, with a glow upon his cheek, that more forcibly than even words could have done, proclaimed his feelings at the moment.

"And to do so, still more," said Osmond, "I will speak for Elizabeth, and say, that she acquiesces in the wishes of all here present."

The scene closed by its being positively settled, that on the day which was to have given her to Sir James, she and Delacour should be united.

The intervening period was chiefly devoted by the family to making arrangements relative to their future mode of living. The fortune of Don Alphonso was noble, and it was decided that a residence suitable to it should immediately be sought for in some pleasant part of the kingdom ; and that on obtaining it, Heathwood should be given up to Farmer Stubbs, as a reward for his fidelity and affection to its present possessors.

Of all his family, Osmond now only breathed the sigh of regret ; neither present gaiety, nor anticipations of future promised splendour, nor expected change of scene, could for a moment detach his thoughts from the fair Cordelia, or weaken the anguish with which he dwelt on the disappointment of his hopes concerning her. Almost persuaded that to subdue his passion was beyond his power, there were times when he had it in contemplation to

make his father acquainted with it, and entreat his interference with Lord O'Sinister; still, however, he was withheld from this measure, by the consideration of the rancorous hatred his lordship bore him, the little likelihood, therefore, there was of his being prevailed on to acquiesce in his wishes, and the probability there was of exciting the resentment and indignation of his father, should he express an inclination to be allied to a man, who had meditated the dishonour of his family.

Relative to the adventures on the continent, in which he had been engaged with Lord O'Sinister, he meant to maintain an inflexible silence, lest, otherwise, if he touched upon them, he should be unable to conceal the feelings with which they had inspired him, and by the revealing of which, the full enormity of his lordship's conduct towards him must be betrayed, which the consideration of his being the father of Cordelia rendered him most unwilling it should be; as also the, at present, unhappy state of his own mind.

Too much disturbed at this crisis, to be

able at all times to participate as he wished in the happiness of his friends, he contrived pretexts for withdrawing himself from them, and plunging amidst the

“Glimmering shades and sympathetic glooms”

of Firgrove, where he could uninterruptedly dwell on the idea so precious to his heart: but even the melancholy pleasure he derived from cherishing this idea was not always unalloyed. Convinced that, in indulging a passion he had every reason to believe hopeless, he was guilty of a weakness highly censurable, the reproaches he incessantly, as well as involuntarily, made himself on the subject, embittered the delight he had in reflecting on Cordelia: still, however, notwithstanding these reproaches, he could not, or rather he would not, make an effort to tear her from his heart.

The morning previous to that fixed for their marriage, he was surprised by his sister and Delacour, in one of his lonely haunts at Firgrove.

“Upon my word,” cried Delacour, the

moment he perceived him, shaking his head, and affecting a grave look, "this looks suspicious!"

"What?" demanded Osmond hastily.

"Why, this passion for solitude. Come, my dear fellow, make your sister and me your confidants, for though no longer experiencing the pangs of hopeless love, we can nevertheless sympathize with those who do."

I make no doubt you can; but," a little pettishly, "notwithstanding, I shall not tax either the sympathy of one or the other."

"Well, what is now rejected may yet perhaps be solicited, for though you have not all the marks of Rosalind's uncle upon you, whereby to know a man in love, yet still I cannot help suspecting that the little blind deity has not been entirely idle with regard to you."

"Indeed! and pray may I ask what has given birth to such a suspicion?"

"Why, first, your being at a time of life when 'tis natural for a man to be in love—secondly, certain little absences in

your manner—and thirdly, your evident predilection for solitude. I shall soon begin to examine these shades narrowly, in expectation of finding odes upon hawthorns, and eligies on brambles,” deifying the name of some rural fair one—But come,” changing his tone, “to drop a subject which I see does not please you, know that your sister’s motive and mine for coming in quest of you, was to communicate some intelligence which I have received by express from my aunt—It will not, perhaps, surprise you to hear that Lord O’Sinister is dead; but it will, perhaps, to hear he died penitent.”

“Dead!—Lord O’Sinister dead!” cried Osmond, in the greatest emotion, and involuntarily recoiling a few paces—“And his——”

“His family,” resumed Delacour, on his pausing, “have already returned from the continent—they are now with my aunt.”

“And does she mention any particulars concerning them,” asked, or rather faltered out Osmond.



“ A few. Amongst other things, she informs me the death of Lord O'Sinister was owing to an affair of honour with Colonel C——, the officer whose wife he seduced some years ago, and who, on discovering the injury he had received from him, took a vow never to rest till ~~he~~ he had revenged the same. To this vow was owing his lordship's precipitate departure from England, and his travelling incog. on the Continent, under false pretexts ; but notwithstanding the various stratagems he had recourse to for eluding it, vengeance at length overtook him ; Colonel C—— traced him to Naples, notwithstanding the circuitous way in which he pursued his journey thither, his frequent stoppages on the road, and travelling under a fictitious name. At the first shot his avenging hand laid him low. The wound was immediately pronounced mortal ; nevertheless the unhappy man lived two days after receiving it, during which he manifested the greatest contrition for his past offences, and endeavoured to prove the sincerity of this contrition, by the manner in which

he arranged his affairs. Amongst those to whom he conceived reparation due from him, I was ranked—he bequeathed me a sum adequate to what he was the means of my father's losing ; but which bequest, I trust every one who knows me, will do me justice to believe, was not requisite to obtain my forgiveness when I heard of his repentance ; for if repentance satisfies Heaven, as we are assured it does, how much more should it satisfy erring man ! —But I am a bad hand at grave reflections, or sage remarks," continued Delacour, laughing, as if at himself ; " suffice it therefore, to say, that to have heard of his lordship's regret for his misdeeds, would have been sufficient of itself to have made me obliterate them from my remembrance."

" Good God !" exclaimed Osmond to himself—" surely, surely if Lord O'Sinister wished in his last moments to make reparation to all whom he had injured, I could not have been forgotten by him."

This idea made him look earnestly in the countenance of Delacour ; but to his

infinite mortification he read nothing there, calculated to confirm it, and his heart immediately sunk.

Making an effort, however, to conceal what was passing in his mind, he asked, with forced composure, whether Lady O'Sinister and her daughter were soon expected in the neighbourhood?

"Yes," said Delacour, with seeming carelessness, turning from Elizabeth, with whom he was conversing, "the nuptials of Miss Athelstone are to be solemnized the——"

"The nuptials of Miss Athelstone!" with difficulty repeated Osmond, and changing colour.

"Yes, like your obedient servant, she is now on the very eve of matrimony."

"On the very eve of matrimony!" again repeated Osmond, staggering back a few paces, and catching hold of a tree for support.

"The intelligence seems to affect you," said Delacour.

"Ye—s, with surprise," stammered out Osmond: recollecting himself—"I—

I can't help being a little surprised that her marriage should take place so soon after the death of her father."

"'Tis in pursuance of his wishes," returned Delacour. "He willed away her hand, as I may say, in his last moments, and exacted a promise from her to fulfil the engagement he formed for her as soon as she arrived in England."

"And pray—pray, may I ask," said Osmond, in a voice scarce articulate, and trembling between hope and fear, "who—who the person is to whom he has bequeathed so precious a gift?"

"I really cannot tell you," answered Delacour; "but whoever he is, he is certainly an enviable being, for she is not only a very fine, but a very amiable girl."

"And—and," still more earnestly, more anxiously, inquired the agitated Osmond, "is she perfectly satisfied with her father's election for her?"

"O, perfectly, I understand from my aunt. She says she is convinced it will be a love match on both sides."

"A love match," repeated Osmond to

himself; "and but a few short weeks ago permitting me hope I never could be forgotten — Oh woman ! woman !" striking his forehead, "false, deceitful woman !" then recollecting himself again, and now more anxious than ever, from a motive of pride, to conceal his unhappy attachment, he was precipitately quitting the spot; when Delacour prevented him by catching his arm.

"Nay, my dear fellow, you must not leave us," said he, "for since so near that magnificent mansion," glancing at the Hall, which they were now in sight of, "we mean to view the interior of it."

"Excuse me," cried Osmond, endeavouring to disengage his arm—"Some other time——"

"Indeed I cannot," returned Delacour. "If you persist in leaving us, the suspicion I have just alluded to will not be weakened, I assure you."

"Well, lead on," said Osmond, endeavouring, but in vain, to smooth his ruffled brow, "and I will follow you."

They accordingly proceeded to the house. On entering the hall, the house-keeper was summoned ; she knew Elizabeth, and on conducting the party up stairs into a spacious gallery, left them, saying she was certain it must be more agreeable to them to view the apartments by themselves, than with her for their guide.

The gallery in which she left them was lined with family portraits. Over these the eye of Osmond carelessly wandered, till at length it became fixed by suddenly discovering the picture of Miss Athelstone, a highly finished likeness, representing her in all the pride of youth and beauty.

Osmond immediately became rooted to the spot.

“ What a heavenly portrait ! ” observed Elizabeth, as leaning on the arm of Delacour she also stopped to view it. “ Certainly this must be some bright vision of his imagination, which the painter has here embodied, for I never saw any creature in real life, so exquisitely beautiful.”

“ You are mistaken, I assure you,” cried

Delacour—"that is the portrait of Miss Athelstone, and when you and Osmond see her, I make no doubt you will concur with me in opinion, that the artist has not done her more than justice."

"More than justice!" repeated Osmond emphatically, and again thrown off his guard, by the emotions this resemblance of the fair Cordelia awakened in his bosom—"oh, how impossible for pen or pencil to do her justice! And yet so lovely is the portrait, that, in the words of Shakspeare, I cannot forbear exclaiming—

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"What demigod  
Hath come so near creation? move these eyes,  
Or whether riding on the balls of mine,  
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips  
Parted with sugar-breath—so sweet a bar  
Should sunder such sweet friends: here, in her hair,  
The painter plays the spider, and hath woven  
A golden mesh t'entrap the hearts of men,  
Faster than guats in cobwebs: but her eyes!—  
How could he see to do them; having made one,  
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,  
And leave itself unfinished!"

"Come, come," cried Delacour, moving forward with Elizabeth, "you seem

quite fascinated by that picture. If you take my advice, my dear fellow, you will gaze no longer on it, since the original is engaged."

"I believe you are right," said Osmond, affecting to laugh, and tearing himself, but not without a lingering look, from the spot: "to continue to do so any longer might perhaps be attended with dangerous consequences."

Delacour and Elizabeth turned into an apartment off the gallery, Osmond followed their steps, and was advancing after them through it to an opposite door, at which they went out, when he became suddenly rivetted to the floor, by beholding Lady O'Sinister and her daughter on a sofa, at no great distance from the one by which he had entered.

Surprise for an instant took from him the power of thinking as well as of moving. The plot which had been contrived to heighten that of Delacour, then recurred to his recollection, and, like him, he began to think he had been deceived in the present instance.



“But should I be mistaken,” he cried to himself, the flush of suddenly revived hope yielding to the paleness of apprehension.

Suspense was not endurable—his anxiety to terminate it restored him to the use of his faculties; he eagerly approached the ladies, who had risen the moment they caught his eye. Lady O’Sinister’s hand was extended to him; he caught it, and raised it to his lips, his looks, however, at the same moment wandering towards her daughter, who half meeting, half shunning his glance, prevented him alike from either hoping or despairing, and whose eyes at the moment, like

“The dewy-star of evening, shone in tears.”

“I see,” said her ladyship, in a voice which proclaimed her in no little emotion at the moment, “that your friend succeeded in imposing on you, relative to us.”

“Imposing!” repeated Osmond—“Oh madam, am I then to discredit what he told me.”

“Why, not absolutely,” returned Lady

O'Sinister, hesitating a little, and half smiling, "for he doubtless told you my daughter was engaged."

"He did," said Osmond, in accents scarce articulate.

"Well in telling you so, he only told you what was true, for she is engaged—Yes," after the pause, the agitating pause of a minute, during which her eyes were fixed upon the varying countenance of the trembling Osmond, "she is engaged—engaged to him whom I myself selected for her—to him whose modest worth, whose virtues, whose fortitude, render him deserving of her."

Then turning to her blushing daughter, she took her hand, and joining it with that of Osmond—"Take her, Munro," she continued, pressing their united hands for an instant between her's—"In thus joining your hands, I fulfil the dying commands of my lord, and accomplish my own wishes—May Heaven shower its choicest gifts upon you, and long continue you a blessing to others, as well as to each other."

Then dropping their hands, she covered her face with her handkerchief, and hastily retired from the room.

The transported Osmond continued for some time after she withdrew, in that state in which Bassanio described himself on receiving from the gentle Portia an assurance of being his.

“ Madam, you have bereft me of all word—  
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins ;  
And there is such confusion in my powers,  
As after some orations fairly spoke  
By a beloved prince, there doth appear  
Among the buzzing pleased multitude ;  
Where every something, being blent together,  
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,  
Express, and not exprest.”

The scene that ensued between him and his fair mistress, we shall pass over in silence.

After an hour had elapsed, Lady O'Sinister returned, and Miss Athelstone at her motion withdrawing, she proceeded to explain to Osmond some particulars she deemed it necessary he should know.

Her lord, truly penitent in his last moments, she said, for all the injuries he

had done him, as well as those he had meditated against his family, had, after giving his free consent to his union with his daughter, willed him half his fortune, in case he no longer wished for such an alliance.

For concealing himself from his knowledge at Acerenza, and during the perilous adventures that succeeded their departure thence, apprehension of his having discovered his conduct towards his sister, was his motive ; and for slandering him in such a way to the Duke D'Amalfi, as made that nobleman anxious to get rid of him, his dread of his succeeding in his efforts to discover his daughter, should he be allowed to remain in Naples.

“ And now,” added she, “ this I trust is the last time his errors will ever be recalled to recollection ; the sincere contrition he felt, and atonement he made for them, having, I humbly trust, expiated them in the sight of Heaven, and equally so I hope in the eyes of the world ; for, as the poet says—‘ He who by repentance is not satisfied, is not of heaven or earth.’—I

shall no longer dwell on the painful subject, than merely to observe, his fate affords a striking proof of the fatal consequences that result from letting passion have entire dominion over us. Had he early endeavoured to curb his unhappy propensities, he might now, in all probability, have been in the full enjoyment of life, surrounded by admiring friends, and rejoicing in the prospect of his child's happiness."

A flood of tears for a few moments impeded the utterance of Lady O'Sinister. On recovering, she proceeded to inform the sympathising Osmond that she had arrived the preceding day at Firgrove, where, in consequence of an express she had sent to her, she was met by Mrs. Dunbar, her old and most intimate friend—By her housekeeper, she added, she had been informed of all that had lately happened at Heathwood, and by her had a private message delivered to Delacour and Osmond's father, announcing her arrival, and desiring to see them immediately.—“In this interview,” she proceeded, “I

fully explained to your father all that was requisite for him to know ; and learning that your sister was to be married to-morrow, was induced to consent to my Cordelia's becoming a bride at the same time.

“ Words are inadequate,” said the enraptured Osmond, respectfully kissing her hand, “ to do justice to the gratitude with which your goodness, in this instance, as well as in every other, has inspired me : but it shall be my study to evince, by my actions, my sense of it. I know not, however, how I shall be able to forgive Delacour, for keeping me so long in ignorance of the happiness that was in store for me.”

“ Nay, it was not his fault, I assure you, that you did not sooner learn it ; but my agitation was so great yesterday, I felt quite unequal to seeing you then.

Her ladyship then proceeded to inform him that her brother, Mr. Beerscroft, had accompanied her to Scotland, and that she had prevailed on Osmond's family to take up their residence with her at Firgrove,

till they had succeeded in obtaining such a habitation as they now required. She completed his joy, by further stating, that just before her departure from Naples, she had the pleasure of meeting his Acerenza friends, happy as their virtues entitled them to be, and determined on visiting Great Britain the ensuing spring, for the purpose of convincing him, neither time nor absence had occasioned any change in their sentiments for him.

Lady O'Sinister's conference with him over; she led the way to a magnificent saloon, where, besides his fair mistress, Delacour, and his sister, he found the rest of his friends from Heathwood, and Mr. Beerscroft. To this gentleman he was immediately introduced by her ladyship, as his destined nephew; after which he received the congratulations of all present on his unexpected happiness.

An animated conversation then took place, till the party separated to dress for dinner. In the dressing-room appropriated to his use, Osmond found Mactalla impatiently expecting him.

"By St. Benedict," exclaimed he, in an exulting tone, as he closed the door to prevent his being overheard, "one may well say now it never rains but it pours; who could have thought of such changes! Poor sinner; but peace be to his soul; they say he died a true penitent, and so let him rest for me: and now, your honour, to let you know of a little surprise of my own."

"Well, what was it?" asked Osmond, as he began to busy himself about his toilette.

"Why nothing more or less than my popping upon little Bianca here."

"Bianca!" repeated Osmond.

"Yes, the grand-daughter of the old man who sent us to the villa of the Duke D'Amalfi, the night you discovered Don Alphonso in the barn."

"O, now I recollect," said Osmond.

"Well, your honour, the old man died shortly after that, and his death leaving poor little Bianca destitute, she was forced to look out for a service. As good luck would have it, Miss Athelstone wanted a



waiting-woman just at that time ; and hearing of Bianca from a person belonging to the villa to which his lordship, her father, removed her from Naples, to be out of your way, she hired her and has brought her over with her ; and travelling has not by any means, I assure you, disagreed with her ; she looks prettier than ever, and if your honour has no objection to having a married man in your service, I think I shall be tempted to try my fortune with her."

"By all means ; if you really love the pretty Bianca, and think she returns your regard, and is worthy of possessing it, delay not asking her hand ; and assure yourself nothing in my power shall be wanting to contribute to your felicity. Providence has wrought a wonderful change in my situation, and the best way in which I can evince my gratitude for that change, is by endeavouring to promote the happiness of my fellow-creatures. I gladly embrace this opportunity of informing you, that your happiness is one of my first considerations. From the light in which

your faithful services have made me regard you, I should always, did I consult my own wishes, desire to retain you with me ; but if you think, when married, you can be happier in a residence of your own, have no hesitation in telling me, since whatever is most likely to contribute to your felicity, will ultimately be most pleasing to me."

"Happier elsewhere than with you !" cried Mactalla, in a broken voice, "no, no, and if Miss Bianca is not content to remain in her present situation, she may retain her present name for me."

"Well, my good fellow, consult her on the subject ; and rely on it, let your decision be what it may, you shall be rendered independent."


From the affecting demonstrations of poor Mactalla's gratitude he escaped as soon as possible, and was speedily rejoined by the rest of the party. The remainder of the day was chiefly spent in pleasing conversation, and the following morning, at nine o'clock, Miss Athelstone and Osmond, and Delacour and Elizabeth, were

united in the chapel of Firgrove ; the former was given away by her uncle, and the latter by her father. The double ceremony over, Lady O'Sinister, who, on this joyful occasion, had exchanged her robe of sable for a plain white one, conducted by Mr. Munro, led the way to the apartment in which breakfast was laid out, and which, from its beauty, was perfectly calculated for a nuptial entertainment ; it was fitted up in imitation of the winter green-house mentioned in the Tatler, and of which the following is a description :

The area was a hundred paces long, fifty broad, and roof thirty feet high. The wall, toward the north, was of solid stone. On the south side, and at both the ends, the stone-work rose but three feet from the ground, excepting the pilasters, placed at convenient distances, to strengthen and beautify the building ; the intermediate spaces were filled up with large sashes, of the strongest and most transparent glass. The middle sash, which was wider than any of the others, served for the public entrance, to which you mounted by six

easy steps, and descended on the inside by as many more. This shut and opened with greater ease, kept the wind out better, and was at the same time more uniform than folding doors.

In the middle of the roof there ran a ceiling, thirty feet broad, from one end to the other ; this was enlivened by a masterly pencil, with all the variety of rural scenes and prospects, which he had peopled with the whole tribe of sylvan deities. Their characters and their stories were so well expressed, that the whole seemed a collection of all the most beautiful fables of the ancient poets, translated into colours. The remaining spaces in the roof, ten feet on each side of the ceiling, were of the clearest glass to let in the sky and clouds from above. The building pointed full east and west, so that you might enjoy the sun while he was above the horizon. His rays were improved through the glass, and you received through it what was desirable in a winter sky, without the coarse alloy of the seasons. The greens and flowers seemed sensible of this benefit ;



they flourished and looked cheerful, as in the spring, while their fellow-creatures abroad were starved to death; a very moderate expense of fire, over and above the contributions received from the sun, served to keep this large room in a due temperature, it being sheltered from the cold winds by a hill on the north, and a wood on the east.

There went through the whole length of the floor a spacious walk of the finest gravel, made to unite and bind so firmly, that it seemed one continued stone, with this advantage, that it was easier to the feet, and better for walking, than if it was what it seemed to be. At each end of the walk, on the one and on the other side of it, lay a square plat of grass, of the finest turf and brightest verdure. What ground remained on both sides, between these little smooth fields of green, was flagged with large quarries of white marble, where the blue veins traced out such a variety of irregular windings through the clear surface, that these bright plains seemed full of rivulets and streaming meanders. This,

to the eye that delighted in simplicity, was inexpressibly more beautiful than the chequered floors, which are in general so much admired. Upon the right and upon the left, along the gravel walk were ranged interchangeably the bay, the myrtle, the orange, and the lemon trees, intermixed with painted hollies, silver firs, and pyramids of yew, all so disposed, that every tree received an additional beauty from its situation ; besides the harmony that rose from the disposition of the whole, no shade cut too strongly, or broke in harshly on the other, but the eye was cheered with a mild rather than a gorgeous diversity of greens.

The borders of the four grass plats were garnished with pots of flowers, these delicacies of nature which recreate two senses at once, and leave such delightful and gentle impressions on the brain, that they may be reckoned of equal force with the softest airs of music toward smoothing our tempers. In the centre of every plat was a statue ; the figures made choice of were a Venus, an Adonis, a Diana, and an

Apollo, such excellent copies as raised the same delight that would have been drawn from the sight of the ancient originals.

The north wall would have been but a tiresome waste to the eye, if it had not been diversified with the most lively ornaments suitable to the place. To this intent a large sum was expended, to lead over arches from a neighbouring hill, a plentiful store of spring water, which a beautiful Naiad, placed as high as possible in the centre of the wall, poured from out an urn. This, by a fall of above twenty feet, made a most delightful cascade into a bason, that opened wide within the marble floor at that side. At a reasonable distance on either hand the cascade, the wall was hollowed into two spreading scollops, each of which received a couch of green velvet, and formed at the same time a canopy over them. Next to them were two large aviaries, likewise let into the stone; these were succeeded by two grottos, set off with all the pleasing rudeness of shells and moss, and cragged stones, imitating in miniature, rocks and preci-

pices, the most dreadful and gigantic works of nature. After the grottos were two niches, the one inhabited by Ceres, with her sickle and sheaf of wheat; and the other by Pomona, who, with a countenance full of good cheer, poured out of her horn a bounteous Autumn of fruits. Last of all came two colonies of bees, whose stations being east and west, the one was saluted by the rising, the other by the setting sun. These all of them being placed at proper intervals, furnished out the whole length of the wall; the spaces that lay between were painted *al fresco*, by the same hand that enriched the ceiling.

In this delightful spot, which it was scarcely possible to enter without feeling the spirits revived, and a sweet complacency diffused over the mind; not to be wondered at, when 'tis considered that here the music of falling waters, the symphony of birds, the gentle humming of bees, the breath of flowers, the fine imagery of painting and sculpture, in a word, the beauties and charms of nature



and of art, courted all the faculties, refreshed the fibres of the brain, and smoothed every avenue of thought; it was here the young bridal folks received the first congratulations of their friends on their marriage—a marriage which their mutual love bid fair to render productive of all the happiness they merited.

“O happy love, where love like this is found;  
O heart-felt raptures, bliss beyond compare,  
I’ve paced much this weary *mortal round*,  
And sage *Experience* bids me this declare—  
‘If heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,  
One cordial in this melancholy vale,  
’Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair  
In other’s arms breathe out the tender tale,  
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale.”

Previous to this happy day, Don Alphonso had made a disposition of his property, and given to each of his grandchildren a fortune suitable to their birth.

Soon after breakfast the grateful heart of Munro led him back to his late residence at Heathwood, for the purpose of putting stubbs in possession of it. He had appointed the honest rustic and his

wife, but without hinting to them why, to meet him there, and was accompanied, at his particular request, by his father-in-law, his son, Delacour, and Mr. Beerscroft.

Leading the way into the parlour, he motioned Stubbs and his dame, who received him in the hall, to follow. On their obeying, he took the farmer by the hand.

“Farmer,” said he, “’tis at length given me to evince, by something more than words the gratitude I owe you. The friends by whom we are now surrounded know the obligations I am under to you ; they know that many of the sorrowful hours I latterly passed beneath this roof were divested of their bitterness through your means ; that for any little comfort either I or mine lately enjoyed we were solely indebted to your kindness. Henceforward consider this house as yours ; and not only it, but all within and appertaining to it, for ever. I give it to you in the full persuasion that it will still, as heretofore, afford a refuge to the houseless child of

want ; that still, as in former times, its gate will readily open to the afflicted and the wayfaring. Necessity, I know, obliged you to send your family from you, but that exists no longer ; collect them without delay, and let the evening of your days be spent in the enjoyment of that domestic felicity, to which the industry, honesty, and benevolence that distinguished the morning so justly entitle you. — Mrs. Stubbs,” turning from the astonished farmer to his equally astonished wife, and presenting her his hand, “ I should deem myself extremely remiss, if I did not also avail myself of this opportunity to thank you for the kind attentions my family and I received from you. Long, long,” uniting the rough and sun burnt hands of the honest rustics, and pressing them for a few minutes between his, “ long, long,” with fervour he added, “ may you and your husband be spared to each other ; hand in hand may ye descend into the vale of life together : may you live to see your childrens’ children rejoicing around


you ; and when from ~~this~~ world translated to a better, may a race as virtuous as yourselves attend you to your last receptacle.” —Then dropping their hands he rushed from the room, overpowered by emotion.

“ Amen !” exclaimed Don Alphonso to what he had just said, but in a voice scarce articulate, and dropping at their feet a rich and heavy purse.

“ Noa, noa,” cried the sobbing farmer, instantly picking it up and following him ; “ if ye do not all wish to break my heart outright by your kindness, you’ll take this back.”

“ Nay,” said Osmond, interposing, “ you must not refuse my grandfather ; he means that purse to defray the expences of a housewarming, which we must have here as soon as your children arrive.”

“ Yes,” rejoined Delacour, “ and I bespeak the hand of your daughter for the first dance ; so say no more on the subject, farmer, but do you and your dame,” slapping him on the shoulder, “ make haste and smarten yourselves to come down



to the Hall, for I assure you, we shall take it much amiss if the healths of the brides at least are not drank there by you."

"Well, well, if it must be," said Stubbs, heaving a deep sigh, indicative of the fullness of his heart, "why it must; but to be sure, I can't help thinking myself in a dream."


The party now quitted the house, the bridegrooms impatient to rejoin their lovely brides, and the other gentlemen convinced that till left to themselves, the honest couple would not be able to regain any degree of composure.

A surprise of a very unexpected nature awaited their return to the Hall. Munro's last letter to Glengary, announcing the happy revolution in his circumstances, and Elizabeth's consequent rejection of Sir James, reached it too late, owing to an accident his messenger met with on the road, to prevent his stepdame from sending the housekeeper to Heathwood, to make preparations for the return of its owners, according to a promise she had made to that effect, in consequence of her

wishing to do something likely to lessen Elizabeth's prejudice to her, with whom, from the moment she looked forward to her becoming the wife of the baronet, her selfish policy made her anxious to stand well.

Mrs. M'Tulloch, or more properly Mrs. O'Grady, having about this time, given herself a right to the latter appellation, by accepting the hand of Sir Patrick Dunboyne's valet, of whom the united attractions of her person and purse, both of a weighty description, had made a complete conquest, could not have been sent upon a more agreeable errand, since affording her an opportunity of again seeing Munro, to whom and his family she was sincerely attached.

She was accompanied from Glengary by her husband, partly to please himself, and partly his master, Sir Patrick, then confined there by a severe fit of the gout, and whose solicitude for intelligence of his nephew made him anxious to send some one to him, on whose account he could depend, and also by old Andrew, in order




that he might have the pleasure of clapping his een once more upon his young master, as he still persisted in calling the discarded heir of Glengary.

At the little inn in the village, where they thought proper to alight, these good folks heard of the happy change which had taken place in the fortunes of Munro, and the marriage of his son and daughter. Instead, therefore, of proceeding to his recent habitation, they repaired straight to the Hall; and so delighted did they appear at the happiness they there witnessed, and so anxious to remain a short time spectators of it, that Lady O'Sinister invited them to remain till the ensuing day—an invitation they joyfully accepted. This led to another surprise. On the party below assembling to dinner, which, in honour of the day, was scarcely inferior to that which had been served above, Mrs. O'Grady, after a little conversation with him, discovered, in Mactalla, the son of an only and beloved brother, who had quitted his native country, many years back, with an officer belonging to the Irish brigades

in France, and of whom she had long, though vainly, been seeking intelligence. Her happiness was unspeakable ; as to that of Mactalla, the happy change in the affairs of his master's family rendered his, at the moment, scarcely capable of addition. All the addition, however, it was capable of, it received from the discovery of his near relationship to so creditable a woman as appearances led him to believe Mrs. O'Grady, and the assurance she gave him of making him her heir, if not blessed with a family of her own, having, previous to her marriage, stipulated that she should have her property at her own disposal.

In spite of her joy, however, at discovering him, Mrs. O'Grady could not help being vexed at the alteration that had taken place in the orthography of his name ; but quickly ceased to be so, on Mactalla's assuring her, on her speaking to him on the subject, that in future he should take care to spell it exactly as their ancient family did ; and that it was not his fault, neither the fault of his father.






that the alteration she so much disapproved of had taken place, but entirely owing to the ignorance of the Marchesa Morati, who, from never having been in Ireland, and knowing nothing of the language, neither knew how to spell or pronounce an Irish name properly.


“Well, well, my darling boy,” cried his overjoyed aunt, again clasping him in her arms, while tears of joy ran down her cheeks, “no matter, no matter, since the foreigners did nothing worse to you than alter your name, I am satisfied.”

“With the leave of the present good company,” said farmer Stubbs, who with his dame had been invited to this entertainment, addressing himself to Mactalla, on the removal of the cloth, “you would favour us, perhaps, with an account of your adventures, for to be sure, Mr. Mac, seeing you have been abroad so long, you must know many wonderful things.”

“That I do,” cried Mactalla, drawing himself up with an air of importance, and



a smile of infinite satisfaction, "and will with pleasure, Mr. Stubbs, give you all the information you wish. To begin then—but Mr. O'Grady, the bottle stands with you; by St. Benedict, and St. Patrick too, if you don't push it about more briskly, but I shall be tempted to believe you imposed upon my good aunt here, when you told her you were an Irishman. Well, Mr. Stubbs," he resumed, after filling his glass, "as I was about telling you, I and my master left the castle of Acerenza, and a famous fine castle it is, one lovely fine morning; but with truth I may say, as you'll allow, by and bye, when you have heard all I have got to tell you, 'tis not always a day that opens well that ends well; many a bright morning has been succeeded by a cloudy night, and many a cloudy night by a bright morning.—But to go on with my story, without circumlocution, as they say in my country. The first place we came to after quitting the castle was a village, but would you believe it, the devil a soul was living in it! no,



by the Powers, for they were all murdered alive one night, and buried in the middle of it—but stay, I forgot to tell you there was another in company with us; but if we were not hampered by having such a spalpeen with us—’tis no matter.”

“That’s a darling,” cried Mrs. O’Grady, “I see you havn’t forgot your Irish.”

“By St. Benedict, no; I kept it in store till my return: but come, I can travel no further without another glass of wine, and to give it a zest, I’ll give you a bit of a toast—May the new married couples above have each a living likeness of themselves before this time twelvemonth, and may somebody,” glancing at Bianca, “that shall be nameless, be shortly as happy as they are.”

“Ah!” exclaimed old Andrew, as he wiped away the tears with which joy suffused his eyes, “you are a cantie cheel, Mr. Mac, and put me in mind of my ain youthfu’ days.”

“Well, now to proceed,” resumed Mac-talla; “all our misfortunes were brought



upon us by that devil of a French boy I just told you about. He couldn't keep up with me and my master, and so fearing we'd give him the slip, he kept bellowing out every moment, like a young bull, that he was going to be robbed. Talk of the devil and he'll appear, used my grandmother Norah, say, and by St. Patrick she said what was right, for the robbers did come at last. A great storm coming on towards night, I and my master took refuge in a wood by the road side ; and snug enough we thought ourselves, till the squalling of Monsieur discovered us to a gang of about forty thieves, that had also taken shelter there. I placed myself between them and my master and the little boy, and though only armed with a horse-whip, gave a devil of a dressing to the forty rogues, notwithstanding the swords, and pistols, and carbines, with which they were armed. I fought them a long time, still crying out to my master as I laid about me, to have courage."

"What !" interrupted Farmer Stubbs,

“with only a whip were you able to fight and kill forty men, armed with swords and pistols !”

“What, kill them all ! no, no, with such odds against him, that would have been more than Sampson himself could have done. I think I did very well in fighting them all for an hour, and then laying fifteen of them low.”

Here a burst of laughter from honest Stubbs again broke the thread of Mr. Mactalla’s story.

“By the Powers, but you have got into a merry humour, Master Stubbs,” cried he, after viewing him some minutes in silence ; “I should like to know what it is has tickled your fancy so suddenly ; it can’t be the tragical battle, I am sure, I have been telling you of.”

“Why, I’ll tell you,” said Farmer Stubbs, as soon as he was again able to speak, which was not immediately. “First, however,” (looking all round him), “asking pardon of this good company for interrupting you ; but if I was to have been

shot for it, I couldn't help laughing at your story, Mr. Mac, it so put me in mind of one I read some years ago, written by a man of the name of—of Munchausen ; aye, that was it, I think ; by goles, yours is as like it as one egg is to another, only that I don't think there are quite so many lies in yours."

"Lies !" repeated Mactalla, rising from his seat ; by the Powers, Mr. Stubbs, but this is not the language of a gentleman."

"Come, come," cried old Andrew, interposing, "deil take me if there shall be ony quarrelling on sic a happy day as this ; come Maister Stubbs, ye must beg Maister Mac's pardon, and then a' will gang weel again."

This Stubbs readily did, protesting he meant no offence.

"No, to be sure," rejoined Andrew, "for he must be a crankous churl, which I am sartin, from your sonsie looks, you are not, Maister Stubbs, who could wish to gi' offence to a peerson who was put-

ting their invention to the rack to afford them amusement, as Maister Mac has been kind enough to do for us."

Mactalla looked a little askance at this speech of old Andrew's; his natural good humour, however, soon got the better of all petulance, and to prove its ascendancy, he proposed singing some Italian airs, for the amusement of the company. His proposal was accepted; and such was the effect his quivering and shaking had upon his auditors, that in a little while several of them endeavoured to chime in with him, by each trying to adapt a song in their own language to the Italian air he favoured them with.

Old Andrew chose—"Green grow the rushes, O;" Farmer Stubbs—"Chevy Chace;" and Mr. O'Grady and his lady—"Ellen a Roon."

That the harmony their united exertions produced was of the most delightful nature, we shall not pretend to assert; such as it was, however, they were perfectly satisfied with it.

Their vocal was at length interrupted by instrumental music from an adjoining hall, in which, by the command of the lady of the mansion, an entertainment was provided for the principal tenants, whilst the others were feasted at the inn in the village.

The mortification of Watkins on this occasion was such as to induce him to seclude himself from every eye ; and shortly after resolve on quitting a place where his conduct to a worthy man had rendered him hateful to all.

The gentlemen looked in upon the happy party below, and for a short time the bridegrooms mingled with the dancers, of whom Mr. Mac, as he was generally styled, was the most conspicuous. As he had before charmed and amazed by his singing, so did he now by his dancing ; but with such grand requisites as he was in possession of for dancing well, namely, a light heart and light heels, it was not surprising he should excel in this accomplishment.




Most unwillingly did Mr. and Mrs. O'Grady and Old Andrew set off the next morning for Glengary. Munro, however, determined never intentionally to give any one reason to complain of him, would not understand the hints they threw out, of their readiness to exchange his father's service for his. He did not, however, permit them to depart, without receiving substantial proofs of the gratitude he felt for their long and disinterested attachment to him, neither without a letter to Sir Patrick, thanking him for the place he had allowed him to retain in his remembrance; and entreating him, as soon as he was sufficiently recovered to be able to travel, to favour him with a visit, and, if agreeable, take up his residence in future with him.

Happy in the society of each other, the party at Firgrove neither wished nor thought of separating, when about a week after Munro and his family had become inmates of it an express arrived from Sir Patrick, to inform him of the sudden death

of his father, just after the old gentleman, in consequence of hearing of the change that had taken place in his circumstances, had destroyed a will made agreeably to the wishes of Mrs. Munro, and avowed a determination of being again on good terms with him.


Upon this intelligence Munro lost no time in setting out for Glengary, accompanied by his son and son-in-law.—Their arrival so immediately after the decease of its late owner, was neither expected, (Sir Patrick having given her no intimation of the express he had dispatched to Heathwood) nor yet desired by the fair relict, as it prevented the removal of certain valuables she had taken a particular fancy to, and which, from perhaps conceiving employment the best antidote against sorrow, she had busied herself in selecting and packing up, almost from the moment of her husband's death.

Compelled by the arrival of the heir to see these restored to their usual places, her



rage and mortification knew no bounds, and in a paroxysm of passion she quitted the house, though informed by Munro, that out of respect to the memory of his father, he should make no objection to her remaining in it, till she had provided herself with a suitable residence elsewhere.

We should here drop her entirely, but that we wish, as far as is in our power, to prove that there are but few instances of vice not sooner or later meeting with punishment in this life. From the neighbourhood of Glengary, to which she soon after bade a final adieu, convinced, from her perfect consciousness of the impropriety of her conduct, that, in losing the title of its mistress, she had lost all that had ever obtained, or could obtain her the notice of its inhabitants, she repaired to Edinburgh, where the property she was possessed of gave her such charms in the eyes of a professional gentleman there, as induced him to solicit her hand, very shortly after they became acquainted, and which, under the idea of his being deeply




enamoured of her, and in possession of a handsome fortune, she had no great hesitation in bestowing on him.

Scarcely, however, was the nuptial knot tied, ere she had convincing proofs of being mistaken in both suppositions; regret and repentance followed the conviction—but a regret and repentance which neither excited sympathy, nor yet amended her own heart.

Munro was too well remembered in the neighbourhood of Glengary for a general joy not to pervade it, at his succeeding to the inheritance of his forefathers—a joy which, but for propriety, would have been publicly manifested, on his arriving to take possession.

In about six weeks after the death of his father, he found himself comfortably settled with his family at Glengary.—Their arrival was welcomed by those rejoicings which decorum in the first instance had prohibited; and for which, his health and Mrs. Munro's being by this time perfectly re-established, there was nothing to prevent



their making suitable returns. But in doing this they did not confine their attentions entirely to their fashionable and wealthy neighbours; benevolence, as well as hospitality again took up its abode at Glengary; and whilst the jocund guest laughed o'er the sparkling bowl, in the richly ornamented saloon, and in the trophied halls, blazing with innumerable lights, youths and virgins led off the dance, the humbler apartments re-echoed with the voice of rustic mirth, and the grateful effusions of relieved distress; in a word, the mansion became what it had formerly been—

“A refuge to the neighbouring poor,  
And stranger led astray.”

His natural stock of pity increased by ~~the~~ sufferings he had himself undergone, his own experience of what it was to eat the bitter bread, and drink the baleful cup of misery, Munro never neglected an opportunity of administering to the wants of his fellow creatures. On the contrary,

he was eager in his search after objects of distress, and was still aided in the luxury of doing good by his family.

The residence of Don Alphonso was fixed for life with his daughter. An elegant and extensive suit of apartments was appropriated to his use at Glengary, communicating by means of a spacious conservatory, lined with costly exotics, and at all times furnishing a pleasant walk, with a small gothic building, containing a chapel, and apartments for a priest.

Here also Sir Patrick, after a little struggle between pride and inclination, consented at length, at the earnest request of his nephew and niece, to pitch his tent, as long as poor *Poulsalough* remained at nurse.

Delacour and Elizabeth, at the earnest request of Mrs. Dunbar, who having no nearer relative than him, avowed her intention of making him her heir, fixed their residence at Black Crag. Lady O'Sinister was seldom long absent from

that or Glengary, losing, in the contemplation of the happiness she beheld the inmates of each enjoying, the keen remembrance of past sorrows, and together with them affording a striking proof, that—

“ Blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,  
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.”

THE END.





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